"Peace, Progress and Prosperity"

A biography of Saskatchewan's first premier, T. Walter Scott

by Gordon L. Barnhart

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100-07476/

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Canadian Plains Research Center
University of Regina
2000

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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Barnhart, Gordon Leslie.

Peace, progress and prosperity : a biography of Saskatchewan's first premier, T. Walter Scott

(Canadian plains studies, ISSN 0317-6290 ; 40)

Based on the author's thesis (Ph.D.) — University of Saskatchewan, 1998.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-88977-142-1

1. Scott, Walter, 1867-1938. 2. Prime ministers — Saskatchewan — Biography.
3. Saskatchewan — Politics and government — 1905-1929*. I. Title.
II. University of Regina. Canadian Plains Research Center. III. Series.

FC3522.1.S36 B37 2000 971.24'02'092 C00-920138-6 F1072.B33 2000

Cover Design: Donna Achtzehner, Canadian Plains Research Center; original art by Grant Welke, Regina, Saskatchewan; cover art enhanced by Brent Pylot, Epic Art Enhancement, Regina, Saskatchewan

Printed and bound in Canada by Houghton Boston, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Printed on acid-free paper

Dedication

To my parents, Jim and Sophia Barnhart — true role models

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—— ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ——

To publish a book, there are always many people who have contributed. I want to thank Dr. Ted Regehr who was my supervisor and mentor when I wrote this biography and to Dr. Bob Calder of the English Department, University of Saskatchewan, for reading the manuscript and being a friend. Ms. Aimee Viel, a History graduate student, who read some extra micro film for me is also deserving of my thanks. Without the help of archivists, a biography such as this could not be done. I give special thanks to the archivists at the University of Saskatchewan Archives, Saskatchewan Archives Board and particularly at the Archives of Ontario and to my long time friend, Ian Wilson, now National Archivist and formerly Provincial Archivist in Ontario and Saskatchewan. Special mention must be given to Dr. Prez, Executive Director of the Homewood Health Centre, who permitted me to review Walter Scott's medical files. I want to thank the family of Walter Scott, both in Ontario and Saskatchewan, who shared their memories, their letters and their photographs with me. Part of the biography that I hope will be meaningful to the reader is the pencil drawing at the beginning of each chapter. I want to thank and acknowledge Grant Welke, a good friend, for his artistic talents and his ability to capture the essence of Walter Scott. Special thanks also to the Board and staff of the Canadian Plains Research Center for their belief that the Scott biography fills a gap in Saskatchewan history and that it should be shared with others.

Finally, I thank my family and friends for their encouragement and advice throughout this journey including my long time friend and partner, Elaine. Her wisdom, support and skill made this project a very positive one. I have fond memories of our research forays together to the research centres, libraries and archives in Southern Ontario and our visits with Walter Scott's descendents.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Illustration by Grant Welke

I make the promise that so far as lies in my power, if the people of Saskatchewan support the policy we present to them, good government, clean government, honest government and, so far as I have the energy and ability for it, progressive government shall be given the people of this province.

— Walter Scott, 1905

According to the *Regina Leader*, this statement by Walter Scott (see opposite) as he was unanimously chosen leader of the provincial Liberal party was greeted with loud cheers. Truly Scott was at the peak of his political power. After having served for five years as the Member of the House of Commons for Assiniboia West, Scott decided to shift to the provincial scene. It was a new beginning for Saskatchewan, one of Canada's newest provinces. To be chosen leader of the Liberal Party was the first step in a plan to become premier of this new province. His internship in Ottawa and his careful planning for the leadership convention paid off.

Thomas Walter Scott was chosen leader at the young age of 37. He was a hard worker and took each new challenge seriously. He was medium in height and of slim build. He was a well-dressed man, always in the latest style of business suit with the customary felt hat. He wore a moustache and had his dark hair trimmed neatly. In his pictures, he often had the jaunty pose, with a twinkle in the eyes, of a man who was about to play a trick on a friend or to tell a humourous story. Although he was not a regular smoker, he often posed for pictures with a cigar in his hand. The clothes and the cigar were part of the image of a man who was up with the times, progressive, and ready to tackle any new challenges that might present themselves.

Scott was the type of individual who always looked at the "big picture." He had the view of the future of his province and saw what was needed to put this new province on the road to growth and prosperity for the centuries to come. No small solution would do if a broader, long-term solution was possible. But Scott was not prepared to deal with the smaller details or the implementation of these plans. This job fell to Jim Calder, Scott's lieutenant throughout his political life. They were a good team — Scott with the ideas and Calder with the patience and eye for detail worked together for eleven years. As it turned out, when Scott experienced personal trials and tribulations, Calder was able to hold the Scott government together. Yet when it came time to consult the people in another provincial election, Scott was able to rally support from the majority of the voters and pull off another victory. Scott was popular with the people, having won five consecutive elections both federally and provincially and never suffering defeat at the hands of the electorate. He was not the most electrifying public speaker, particularly in comparison to Frederick Haultain, the territorial leader of the government, but Scott was able to find the correct turn of phrase and could speak to the people at their level. He portrayed the image that he understood their problems and had a plan of action to alleviate them. Scott was a consensus builder. He could work with

divergent points of view and, with some study and consultation, often bring the two sides together and subsequently win their support. As will be shown, Scott was repeatedly able to outmaneuver Haultain and force his political opponent into supporting an unpopular stand. Scott was a populist who was in touch with the grass roots of his province. Yet he was able to convey his prairie roots to the halls of power in Ottawa and to fight for the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. He was as much at home with the prairie farmer working with his horses in the field as he was with the Prime Minister of Canada in the marble halls of the Centre Block in Ottawa.

Scott's secret to success was his ability to show people that he remembered them and could identify with their problems. He opened most of his letters with a personal note asking about his corresponents' health or how their children were doing in school. He would remember if someone in the family had a particular problem and would enquire about it, or would offer some possible solution. He responded quickly to every letter and wrote hundreds of letters every month, even while traveling around the world. He never missed an opportunity to send a congratulatory note for a wedding or anniversary. His letters of condolence were full of heartfelt meaning. He would close most letters with a personal note that Mrs. Scott was sending her personal best wishes to the wife of the person to receive the letter. It is no wonder that Walter Scott was able to work his way into the hearts of the majority of the people he represented.

A good example of Scott's ability to show empathy is found in his correspondence with E.J. Meilicke, a long-time employee of the License Commission. On December 9, 1914, Scott replied to a letter from Meilicke:

> In accepting your resignation from the Saskatchewan License Commission, which is contained in your letter of Nov. 30th, I wish to say,— and in saying so I speak for every member of the Government,— that no casual word can quite convey the measure of appreciation which we feel towards the remarkable successful, and valuable service, rendered the Province and the Government by you during a long period of years, in a sphere of work so difficult as to demand in unusual degree, common sense, diplomacy and integrity. So thoroughly satisfactory was your work, from the public standpoint, that on previous occasions when you spoke of resigning, I always set my face resolutely against such action. Most sincerely do I regret the circumstances existing at the present time, which would make it unfair that I should again oppose your wish to relinquish the work. May I most earnestly express the hope, that the present terrible situation will soon pass away. And let me assure you that you and yours will always have my very best wishes.[1]

But Scott did not rely only on the soft or personal side of politics. He offered the people of Saskatchewan good government, honest government, responsive government, and a pipeline to the powers in Ottawa. Scott was not impulsive in his decision making. He was often criticized for procrastination, to the point that frequently his own colleagues became frustrated with his seeming inability to come to a conclusion or a firm policy. Yet this became one of Scott's strengths. When faced with a difficult problem, he would often establish a commission to examine the possible options and to consult with the people. He relied on public consultation

in policy formulation but this did not mean that he was without his own ideas or policies. He often used the commissions to guide public thinking so that by the time the policy was announced or legislation was introduced in the legislature, the public was supportive of the new direction. Scott built coalitions between Protestants and Catholics, farmers and urban dwellers, and residents in the North and the South of the province. He was one of the first Canadian premiers to include women in politics and courted the "ban the bar" movement with care and attention. After having consulted the people and experts in the field, and once a decision was made, Scott was decisive in implementing the new policy. He fought his political opponents with the intensity of war and called the Conservatives "the enemy."

Due to work and health reasons, Scott was away up to six months of every year that he was premier. When he was working, he would have bursts of energy and write letters and speeches with great rapidity. He traveled extensively throughout the province, meeting with farmers and town people alike. Even while away, his personal staff responded to his correspondence advising the reader that the premier was away but that he would respond on his return, which he did.[2]

Not only was Scott popular with the voting public but he won solid support from his cabinet colleagues and personal staff. The *Leader* on August 23, 1905 reported that Scott was greeted with enthusiasm and "loyal and undivided support." There is no evidence to show that cabinet support ever wavered. He was known as a man "who can be depended upon." His personal staff also dedicated their talents and loyalty to the man who could lead the party and the province to prominence within Canada. His private secretary, J.W. McLeod, and his personal secretary, Miss Lottie Craig, were devoted to their boss throughout his time as premier. As a political leader, Scott had loyal lieutenants.

Walter Scott not only survived five elections federally and provincially, but he increased his majorities as premier in every provincial election. He was not without his critics, of course, particularly the Conservative or Provincial Rights Party, as it was called then, and the Conservative press. But Scott was able to fend off popular and long-standing leaders such as Haultain and Willoughby. Scott in collaboration with Jim Calder built a political force that later became known as a machine. The Scott political legacy was the fact that the Liberal Party stayed in power nearly uninterrupted for twenty-eight years after he left politics. He built his power base on agriculture and the farm economy. What was good for the farmer and the small towns was good for the Scott administration. Even though he had been born on a farm in Ontario, he had never been a prairie farmer by occupation. Yet he knew and understood their problems and had some ideas as to what a small government without abundant resources could do to ease the burden of the Saskatchewan farmer. The Scott government introduced a cooperative grain elevator and grain buying system for the province to assist the farmers without committing the government to excessive financial risk. Scott built on the philosophy of cooperation that exists today.

Scott was not just driven by agriculture and economics. He was also a social reformer. Under his leadership, the province took the first step toward total prohibition by closing the bars. Alcohol was sold to the public under strict government

regulation through publicly owned liquor stores. Scott proposed introduction of legislation to grant the vote to women in 1916. Even though Scott was raised as a Protestant, he fought to preserve the rights of Catholics in the schools. He hoped that eventually there would be a single school system, but in the meantime he was willing to defend the rights of all denominations.

Scott was a tireless worker for the interests of the West. As a Member of Parliament and then as a western premier, he was a "booster" of the growth and coming prosperity for the newest region in Canada. He supported the Sifton immigration and settlement policy which was bringing increasing numbers of new settlers to the West. He fought for the interests of Saskatchewan in the autonomy bills when the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were created. The *Leader* described Scott as "an indefatigable worker in the interests of the West." In the five years that he was the federal member, he had "stepped into the forefront among the Western representatives, and has won the high opinion of his constituents, and of the government leaders." Even the opposition newspaper, the *Standard*, admitted that Scott's career in Ottawa had been "remarkably successful."

With all of the accolades for Walter Scott and the success of his political life, there was an air of mystery about his private life. His disappearances of up to six months a year, although not well known amongst the general public, caused some concern within his own party. Scott, with Calder's assistance, continued to lead the province until 1916 when his personal frailties finally led to his downfall.

This, then, is the story of the powerful and talented man who led Saskatchewan during the first eleven years of its history as a province. It is also the story of a man wrestling with his personal demons and his search for a cure.

CHAPTER 2
THE EARLY YEARS

[1867-1899]

Saskatchewan Archives Board R-A6006

Most pre-marital conceptions were followed by marriage, although not always to the same men and often after several years had elapsed.

— Andrew Blaikie

There was a hint of frost in the air in rural Ontario when Thomas Walter Scott was born on October 27, 1867, the birth year of the new nation called Canada. That, surely, was an auspicious beginning for this young baby, the son of George Scott and Isabella Telfer Scott.[1] Walter Scott was born in his grandmother's house at lot twenty-nine, concession nine, township of London, County of Middlesex, approximately halfway between Strathroy and London, Ontario. This section of Ontario was agricultural, with 100-acre farms of rich land carved out of the forest. The farmhouses were located near the main roads and less than a quarter of a mile apart. Settled mainly by British immigrants just thirty years before Scott's birth, it was a close-knit, staunchly Presbyterian community. The key families were the Telfers, the Scotts, the McDonalds, the Robsons and the Baties.

Unfortunately for Walter, his childhood circumstances were unusual. According to his autobiography, his father had died before Walter was born. Throughout his life, Walter Scott wrote to friends lamenting that he never knew his father. He had "no recollection of a father, he having passed away before my birth."[2] Scott lived for the first four years of his life with his mother, Isabella Telfer and his grandmother, Mary Telfer. On December 27, 1871, Isabella Telfer married John A. McDonald, a neighbouring farmer who lived across the road from the Telfers. Over the next

Gordon Barnhart

The tree marks the location of the house where Walter Scott was born, near Strathroy, Ontario.

Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB) R-B1509-7

The McDonald family. Walter Scott (back row left) with his step-sisters and step-brother, his step-father, John A. McDonald, and his mother, Isabella Telfer McDonald.

nine years, the McDonalds had four children: Minnie (b. March 12, 1873), John Adam (b. September 7, 1875), Maggie Jane (b. June 5, 1878), and Willie (b. August 17, 1880). Walter Scott continued to live with his mother and his stepfather. From all accounts, it was a happy household with Walter and his half-brother, John, becoming particularly close. Theirs was a friendship that would last a lifetime.

A closer examination of the autobiography reveals several inconsistencies. The 1871 census report shows that there were three residents on lot twenty-nine, concession nine: Mary Telfer (age sixty-five and a widow), Isabella Telfer (age thirty and single) and Thomas W. Scott (age three). If Isabella was a widow as Walter later claimed, why was this not shown on the census report? In reviewing the records for George Scott (Walter Scott's alleged father), it is apparent that he was married to Isabella's cousin, Ann Telfer Scott. George Scott actually lived until 1896, not 1867 as claimed by Walter.[3] As further proof that Isabella Telfer was single when Walter was born, a wedding announcement in the *London Advertiser* for January 4, 1872, shows that "Miss" Isabella Telfer married John A. McDonald on December 27, 1871, four years after Walter's birth. This was Isabella's first marriage. She had been single at the time of Walter's birth. This, then, made Walter a "bastard child," as was the expression at that time. Certainly a scandal in the community must have erupted when an unmarried woman gave birth to a child.

Andrew Blaikie, a demographer who studied the effect of illegitimate births in Scotland in the last century, has shown that unmarried mothers often lived with their mothers or other members of the family. According to Blaikie, "Most premarital conceptions were followed by marriage, although not always to the same men and often after several years had elapsed."[4] One can surmise that conditions

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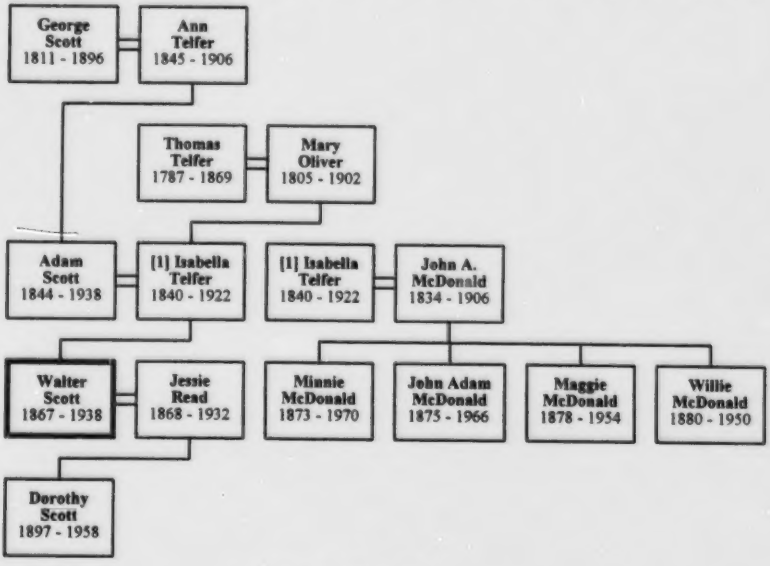
Walter Scott as a small boy.

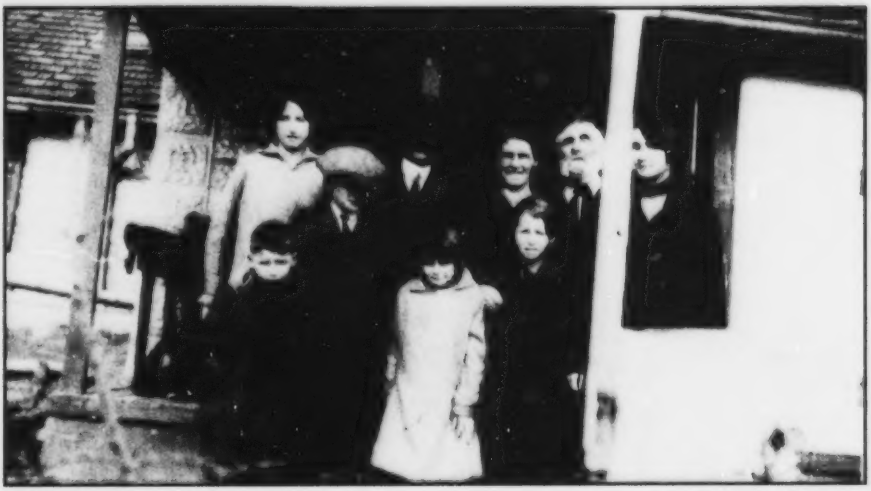
were similar in Ontario in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. There was also a double standard whereby society viewed the unmarried mother as the cause of her own misfortune, while the man was allowed to go free without having to bear any of the responsibility for the birth.[5] Whether Walter Scott was the subject of discrimination is not known, but the perceived and real stigma of his illegitimacy became a factor in his mental health in later life.

The family and neighbours in Middlesex County knew about Walter Scott's beginnings in life. As noted above, Walter claimed throughout his life that George Scott was his father. By 1867, Ann Scott had left her husband, George Scott, and was living with her daughter, Jane Heslop Scott and her family. George and Ann were ultimately reunited and subsequently moved to Oak Lake, Manitoba, in 1870.[6] One can only speculate that the scandals over Walter Scott's birth caused this marital disruption and the move West.

But was George actually the father of Walter Scott? In letters that Walter Scott wrote to his cousin, G.A. Scott, in Davidson, Saskatchewan in 1906, Walter refers to his own "grandmother" being ill.[7] In writing to James Balfour of Regina, Walter mentioned his grandmother having died at Davidson and being buried in Oak


George Scott 1811 - 1896
Ann Telfer 1845 - 1906
Thomas Telfer 1787 - 1869
Mary Oliver 1805 - 1902
Adam Scott 1844 - 1938
[1] Isabella Telfer 1840 - 1922
[1] Isabella Telfer 1840 - 1922
John A. McDonald 1834 - 1906
Walter Scott 1867 - 1938
Jessie Read 1868 - 1932
Minnie McDonald 1873 - 1970
John Adam McDonald 1875 - 1966
Maggie McDonald 1878 - 1954
Willie McDonald 1880 - 1950
Dorothy Scott 1897 - 1958

Walter Scott's family tree



Helen Scott, Ottawa

The Scotts of Oak Lake, Manitoba (1927). Adam Scott, Walter's Scott's likely father, is in the back row, second from the right.

Ruth and Una Loft, Ilderton, Ontario

Telfer School (1882). Walter Scott is in the third row from the top, seventh from the left.

Lake, Manitoba in 1906. This grandmother was Ann Telfer Scott, wife of George Scott. If she was Walter's grandmother, then George had to be Walter's grandfather and not his father. Who then was Walter Scott's real father?

When Walter Scott was born, two people left the Telfer community on very short notice. Jim Scott and his older brother Adam, sons of George and Ann Scott, went to Kansas to find work. Adam never did return to Ontario. According to Helen Scott (a niece of Adam Scott) and Oliver Fenwick (whose mother was a Telfer), the oral history that was passed down through the families over the generations indicates that Walter's father was actually Adam Scott and that this was the reason he hurriedly left the country.

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Walter Scott's favourite teacher, Miss Langford.

Although his beginnings in life were controversial, Walter's early years were rather more mundane. He attended Telfer School, which was approximately a quarter of a mile up the road from home. Telfer Corner was the site of the school, the United Presbyterian Church, the post office, the "antiburger" Presbyterian Church and a cemetery. Telfer Corner became the focus for Walter Scott in his formative years, with regular attendance at school and the United Presbyterian Church. According to his reminiscences later in life, Scott had a strict upbringing within the church. Sunday was reserved for going to church and Sunday school; no pleasurable activities were allowed.

Scott spent the first four years of his life with his mother and grandmother, who provided an unusually strong feminine influence in a society which was dominated by men. Women in the 1860s in Ontario were legally subordinate to men and could not vote. There were serious impediments for married women to own real estate. A woman was to be "submissive, amiable, and virtuous; she was to celebrate her subordination to men and find fulfilment and happiness in the private world of her home."[8] A few single women or widows did own property but this was rare. Scott's grandmother was one of these exceptions because she, as a widow, did own a farm. One can speculate that Scott's grandmother was a person of determination and strength as she farmed and cared for her daughter and grandson. At age four, Scott, along with his mother, moved to the John A. McDonald farm nearby and had to learn to live with a stepfather and eventually four half-brothers and half-sisters. He started school in the fall of 1871 and was known to be somewhat mischievous. On one occasion, when Walter Scott was in trouble with his teacher, he claimed that he was innocent and bolted for home. He was sent back

after lunch with no punishment to follow. The surviving records do not explain the nature of the offence or the reason why there was no punishment.

Scott's favourite schoolteacher, a woman by the name of Langford, prepared him for his high school entrance exams. Scott passed these exams but quit school after he had completed the eighth grade, a decision he came to regret. Even though he succeeded in his subsequent careers as a journalist and politician, he always felt that he had to work harder than most in order to compensate for his lack of formal education. Scott suffered from asthma and missed many days of school. He left home on July 2, 1883 at the age of fifteen to work for neighbouring farmers.

As noted above, Scott grew up in a Presbyterian and British community. Judging by the elected representatives for the area, Scott's formative years were spent surrounded by Reform Liberals. The local member of Parliament (MP) was George W. Ross, a "thorough Reformer" and a worker within the temperance and prohibition movement. The provincial member of the Ontario Legislature for Middlesex West, which included Strathroy, was J. Watterworth who was a "Liberal and supporter of Mr. Mowat."[9] Since the majority of the voters in Middlesex West supported Reform/Liberal candidates, one can conclude that Scott was influenced by Liberal thought even though there is no evidence to show that he was actively involved in partisan politics before he left Ontario.

On March 17, 1885, Scott left his family, boarded a train and headed for Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. Several members of Scott's community had already moved West, and the reports they sent home described a rugged land, but a land of opportunity. Those willing to work hard could make their fortune in the West, and Walter was able to convince his mother that the move would be financially beneficial. Furthermore, he assured her that the fresh, western air would be sure to improve his asthmatic condition.

Scott's original plan was to go to Portage la Prairie, where he would live and work on a farm with his mother's twin brother, James Telfer. However, by the time he arrived at Portage la Prairie, the North-West Resistance had broken out and Scott's uncle had left to help suppress Riel and the Métis insurgents. Because there was now no position on the farm with his uncle, a change of plans was necessary, and Scott took a job at the Strome Henderson General Store as a delivery boy for $20 per month. After paying his room and board, he had $10 left.

Although Scott had been forced to alter his plans because of political circumstances beyond his control, the move West seemed to agree with him. In his autobiography, Scott noted that his physical health had improved, and that he did not suffer from asthma during the summer of 1885. Apparently the fresh western air was the cure he needed.

Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the potential wealth and fresh air were Scott's only reasons to move West. Rather, it is likely that Scott left his home community because of his illegitimacy. He had no chance to inherit the family farm, since his two half-brothers were in line for their father's land. In his unpublished autobiography, Scott used asthma and the lure of fresh air as his reason to leave because he

could not admit his illegitimacy. If asthma was the reason for leaving the Ontario farm, it is strange that he intended to work on a farm near Portage la Prairie. The fresh air may have been a factor, but it is more likely that the chance of a new beginning, where he could leave his past behind, was the real motivation behind his decision to move. In this, he would not have been unlike many of his peers. Paul Voisey, in his book on Vulcan, Alberta, noted the number of people who had moved West, to the wilderness, to make a new beginning and to escape from the past.[10]

After five months at the general store, C.J. Atkinson, owner and editor of the *Manitoba Liberal*, offered Walter Scott a job as a "printer's devil." This meant doing miscellaneous jobs around the print shop, including lighting the fires in the morning and sweeping the floor.

The *Manitoba Liberal* was a four-page weekly which Atkinson had started in April 1883. The editorials were critical of the Manitoba members of Parliament for failing to represent the interests of the North-West — Atkinson called these MPs "Manitoba's misrepresentatives." An editorial on April 17, 1884 showed Atkinson's colours by openly supporting the "great Reform party" and the principles proclaimed by Edward Blake, federal Leader of the Opposition. One month later, Atkinson openly supported Blake in his criticisms of the rising costs of building the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Atkinson believed that the western section of the CPR should be built only when there was sufficient traffic to cover the operating costs of the line.

Meeting Atkinson was one of the pivotal events in Scott's young life. It proved to be the beginning of his careers as a journalist and a politician — two occupations that Scott would follow for the remainder of his working life. There is no record of any political activity in Scott's early life before coming to Portage la Prairie, but meeting Atkinson set him on the road to becoming an active Liberal.

Newspapers in the late nineteenth-century were part of the fabric of political life. Not only the editorials, but the news stories, carried a particular bias in favour of one or the other of the political parties. Journalists and editorial writers, usually also the owners of the newspaper, made no pretense of writing a balanced or unbiased report. The parties, in turn, made a point of owning or at least controlling newspapers in the main centres to ensure influence over the reading public.

Key sources of revenue, often vital for the continuance of the paper, were government printing contracts. These contracts were handed out by the government to the newspapers which had shown their support in the past. For Scott to enter the newspaper business thus meant that he was also going into the world of politics. Even the names of the newspapers, such as the *Manitoba Liberal*, clearly indicated the political preference of the owner. Even though Walter Scott was a newcomer to the province, he sensed the new partisan political mood that was blossoming in Manitoba. Under the tutelage of C.J. Atkinson at the *Manitoba Liberal*, Scott had a direct entry into the world of western partisan politics.

Scott soon moved from printer's devil to try his hand at typesetting and printing jobs, and evidently he impressed his employer. In the summer of 1886 Atkinson

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Regina as it appeared in 1882, four years before Scott's arrival.

left Portage la Prairie to start a new newspaper, the *Journal*, in Regina. By December Scott was also in Regina, working for Atkinson at the *Journal*.

The Regina of 1886 was a small but vibrant centre of less than 900 people, living in shanties arranged with no apparent plan. The harvest that year had been poor and the economy seemed unpredictable. The North West Mounted Police depot, situated several miles from the town site, was the centre of cultural activities and musical shows. One can imagine the long, cold and dark walk home in the winter from the depot to Regina after a dance. However, the cold winters brought a welcome reprieve from the sea of mud that plagued the citizens for the other three seasons of the year.

The Regina newspaper that Scott joined was as large as the *Manitoba Liberal*, but much "spicier." The first issue of the *Journal* hit the Regina streets on October 8, 1886. The eight-page weekly was dedicated to the issues of the North-West such as the tariff, railways, freight rates and the conduct of public officials. The newspaper claimed to be an advocate of "social and moral well-being," temperance and Senate reform. C.J. Atkinson had not changed his moral, social, or political beliefs from his days as editor/owner of the *Manitoba Liberal*.

In addition to his move to Regina that year, 1886 was influential for Scott because he met J.H. (Jim) Ross, a rancher from Moose Jaw and a prominent Liberal organizer in the Regina and Moose Jaw communities.[11] Ross went on to become a member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of the North West Territories, the MP for the Yukon, and ultimately a senator. Like Atkinson, Ross would be influential in Scott's decision to make a career in the Liberal Party.

Up to this point, Scott had not taken a high political profile, but during the 1887 federal election campaign, which he covered for the *Journal*, he referred to Ross, the Liberal nominee, as "our candidate." Even though his candidate was defeated in the Assiniboia West constituency by the Conservative, Nicholas Flood Davin, a journalist and owner of the *Regina Leader*, it was apparent that Scott had

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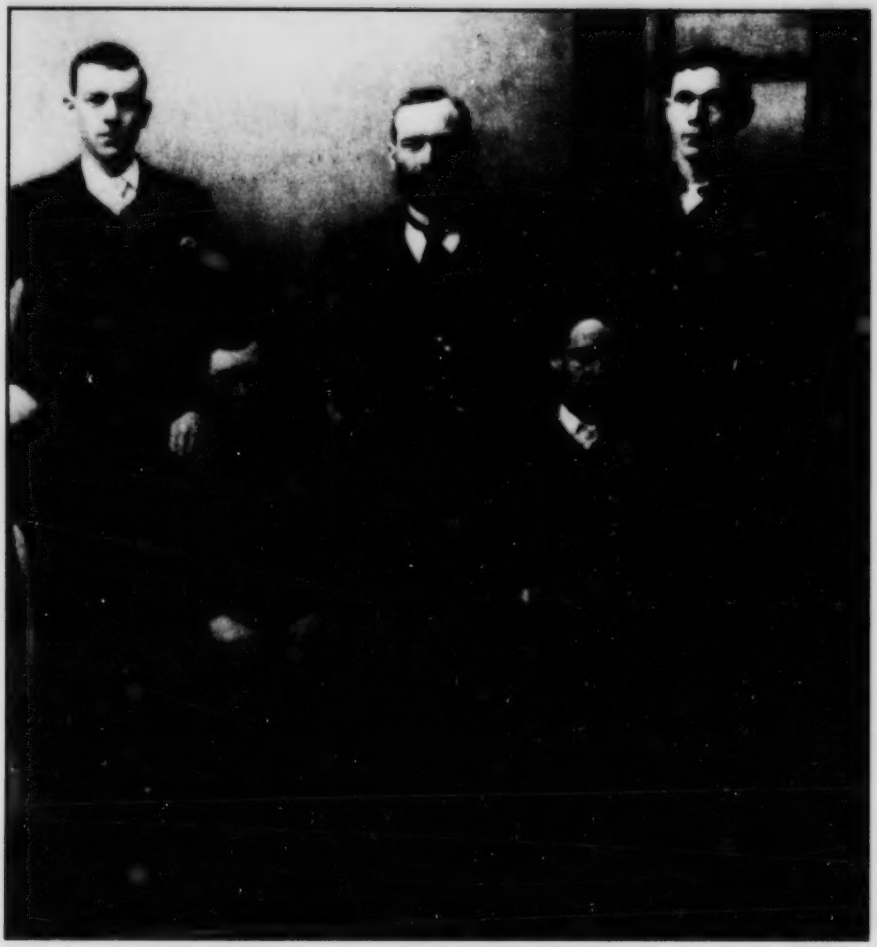
Walter Scott (back row, first on right) as a member of the Regina baseball team (1886).

developed a taste for politics. Through his newspaper work, he was able to rub shoulders with the prominent politicians from all parties and could not help but be influenced by his employer, C.J. Atkinson.

The Conservatives in Assiniboia West had hoped for a nonpartisan election in order to have Davin elected by acclamation, but to no avail.[12] On local issues, there was little difference between the Ross and Davin platforms. If elected, Davin promised to push the federal government for a fully elected Territorial Legislature and an abolition of the duty on lumber and agricultural implements.[13] Jim Ross proposed a similar platform. It was on the national issues that the two differed. Nationally, it was the Grits versus the Tories — Edward Blake's supporters against the Macdonald team. Davin praised the National Policy while Ross called for a change in government. The campaign became somewhat personal, with C.J. Atkinson of the *Regina Journal* attacking Davin.[14] The Assiniboia West election was Scott's first experience with politics in the West.

During the federal election campaign in February-March 1887, the editorial policy of the *Journal* clearly supported J.H. Ross. Even though Ross was defeated on March 15, the *Journal* proclaimed that he was a man of the people who had been defeated by the forces of government, the Mounted Police, the railways and the land companies. Atkinson wrote that an ideal political candidate should have "sterling worth, uncompromising integrity and straightforward independence." The editor did not believe that Davin had these qualities.

Nicholas Flood Davin, as owner of the *Regina Leader*, had his own way of combatting Atkinson's criticisms, and an editorial war ensued. In contrast to the support



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Walter Scott first came to Regina in 1886 as a member of the staff of the Regina Journal, *a Liberal paper published in opposition to Nicholas Flood Davin's (Conservative)* Leader. *The* Journal *was founded in 1886 by C.J. Atkinson and was succeeded in 1890 by the* Regina Standard. *Front row left to right: John McIntyre, John McAra; back row: Bob Machesney, C.J. Atkinson and Walter Scott (c. 1887).*

of Liberals Edward Blake and Wilfrid Laurier for the Métis leader, Louis Riel, Davin praised the Canadian troops for having "broken the back of the rebellion." Davin supported Macdonald in his role of stopping Riel. After Riel's trial and execution, Davin wrote that Riel had shown his bloodthirstiness by leading two rebellions, and that the federal government was correct in not commuting Riel's sentence: "The truest mercy to both [Indians and Métis] is to show them unmistakenly and if necessary, sternly, that no man can attempt to destroy the authority of the government of this country in any part of it unless at the peril of his life."

But life was not all newspapers and politics for the young Walter Scott. He attended picnics and summer events where young men could meet the local young women. It was at one of these picnics in the summer of 1887 that Walter met Jessie Florence Read, daughter of E.B. Read, of Regina. They dated through that winter. He escorted her to "several assemblies" and went skating and tobogganing. Scott had been increasing his earning power as he became a typesetter and later a reporter at the newspaper, but according to his own admission, he had increased his spending even more due to high living, and found that he was continually in debt. With his attraction to Miss Read, Walter decided to gain control of his finances. He had learned a lesson on indebtedness.

Frank Rycroft, Glencoe, Ontario

The wedding photograph of Walter and Jessie Scott (1890).

On May 14, 1890, Walter and Jessie were married by the Reverend Leonard Dawson in a small ceremony at St. Paul's Church, Regina. Walter reminisced that it was the "most auspicious event of my life." The *Journal*, extended its congratulations to the young couple on their marriage. The *Regina Leader* noted that Walter Scott was receiving congratulations from "his many friends" on the joining "in the holy bonds with Miss Jessie Read."

In his first few years in Regina, Scott worked for the *Journal*, and then, in the hope of career advancement, he shifted to the *Leader*. By fall of 1892, Scott decided it was time to stop working for others in the newspaper business and he struck off on his own. With the town of Regina expanding at a dizzying pace and new settlers arriving each year, the newspaper business along with general printing seemed to be the way to make a fortune.

On September 17, 1892, Walter Scott went into equal partnership with J.K. McInnis to buy the *Standard* and formed the Standard Printing Company. There is no indication in the Scott papers as to how he accumulated enough money to buy half of the *Standard*, but one can surmise that because he had a good job as a reporter and his share of the partnership would have cost no more than $500, he could afford to launch his newspaper career through this partnership. The paper's revenue came from the sale of papers, advertising and printing contracts. Business was so good that within less than two years Scott bought the *Moose Jaw Times* at a discounted price of $600, a decision prompted by Jim Ross and A. Hitchcock, a Moose Jaw banker. Scott noted that the purchase was a "good bargain," and he remained the owner of the *Moose Jaw Times* for the rest of his life. It was a money-

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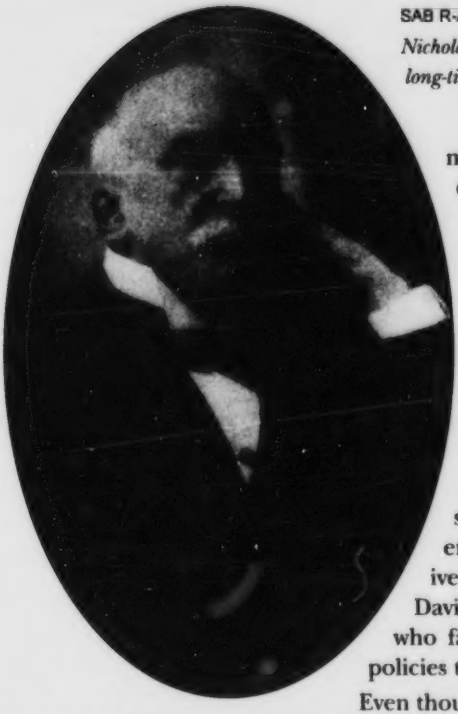
The home of Walter and Jessie Scott in Regina (c. 1900).

maker for him over the years, and a vehicle to spread his own political philosophy. Scott initially announced in the paper that he would not be taking sides in the political battles but would be giving the readers balanced reports with plenty of local news. In an editorial dated August 31, 1894, Scott surprised many by supporting the Conservative MP, N.F. Davin. Scott noted that although Davin was "off colour," apparently from alcohol, he hoped that Davin was "not losing his power of eloquence, for if facility of expression left him he would not be Mr. Davin at all."

Thus by 1894, nine years after leaving Ontario, Walter Scott was the owner of one newspaper and half owner of another, becoming a prominent citizen in both Regina and Moose Jaw. Scott and McInnis had agreed that Scott would move to Moose Jaw to operate the *Times*, while McInnis would stay in Regina to look after their interests at the *Standard*. It was not long before Scott expanded his newspaper empire even further.

On August 22, 1895, Scott bought the *Regina Leader* from Davin. This was a sign of the arrival of a new generation and the changing of the guard. By this point, Davin was interested in lightening his load as newspaper owner and as a member of Parliament. As part of the deal in selling his newspaper, Davin had Scott's agreement that Davin would write or at least control the contents of the first two editorials each week. Davin seemed to have won the best part of the bargain, as he had lightened his load and at the same time knew he had the support of the largest newspaper in the district. For his part, Scott increased his hold over the newspaper industry in Regina and district.



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Nicholas Flood Davin (1843-1901), Walter Scott's long-time political opponent.

This was not to be a stable arrangement as Scott found it more and more difficult to support Davin. Initially Scott and Davin were friends and newspaper colleagues, but with Davin sitting as a Conservative MP and Scott under the tutelage of Liberals such as Atkinson and Ross, the partisan political differences were hard to mask and their personal friendship began to crumble. In May 1896, with the federal election set for June 23, Scott temporarily leased the *Regina Leader* to several of Davin's friends so as to ensure that the newspaper was supportive of Davin. The 1896 campaign pitted Davin against J.K. McInnis, an independent who favoured freer trade, cooperation and policies to support agriculture in the West.

Even though the *Standard* was owned by McInnis and Scott, McInnis set the editorial policy. During the 1896 election campaign, McInnis hired a man named Trant to operate the *Standard*. Nonetheless, the paper was still critical of Davin for voting along party lines instead of defending the interests of the West. Davin had publicly stated that he opposed the remedial legislation which would have restored Roman Catholic interests in the Manitoba schools. When it came time for the vote in the House of Commons, Davin voted with the Conservatives and in favour of the Remedial Bill. In an editorial, the *Standard* criticized Davin for being drunk, offensive and for not having tried to amend the National Policy.[15] One week later, in an attempt to prove that farmers were not overtaxed by the tariffs under the National Policy, Davin pointed out they paid taxes only on alcohol and tobacco.

Meanwhile, McInnis supported Wilfrid Laurier as long as he favoured "Patrons of Industry" principles such as freer trade and policies favourable to the farmers. McInnis claimed that Parliament would be stronger if more independent members were elected. He also favoured the construction of a rail line to Hudson Bay to assist the farmers in the export of their grain.

The *Regina Leader*, operated by Davin's friends, took an equally partisan stance but in favour of Davin. For both Davin and McInnis, the tariff, the National Policy, and the Manitoba School Question were the key issues of the election. On June 23, 1896, Laurier formed a majority government and Davin was elected to the opposition benches. Two days after the election, Scott was back at the editor's desk of the *Regina Leader*. He wrote that while his newspaper would not claim to

be independent, it would not be under the control of any political party. He promised, in an editorial, that he would judge each issue on its merits.[16] He then congratulated Laurier on his victory. Scott believed that the principal issues of the election had been trade, the Manitoba School Question and honesty in government, and that Laurier would solve all of these problems.

Two years later, on January 10, 1898, Scott's ties to the Liberal party were further strengthened when he was unanimously chosen by the party "to dispense the patronage of this [Moose Jaw] district." As well, with Jim Ross and L.B. Cochran, Scott was appointed to a committee to arrange speakers for political meetings in the area. The combination of newspaper ownership and influence over the patronage levers for Moose Jaw and district meant that Scott had much political and financial control over the events in the community. This patronage was limited to the federal sphere but included the allocation of printing and public works contracts and appointments with the federal government. To obtain a federal public service job, one had to have the backing of the local member of Parliament, particularly if that member happened to be from the party in power. Since the Conservative N.F. Davin was the MP for Moose Jaw and area, and there was a Liberal government in Ottawa, the coordination of the letting of contracts and appointments in the area rested with the local patronage boss, who in this case was Walter Scott. The stage was set for Scott to enter politics as an elected member.

One problem loomed large in Walter Scott's mind. The circumstances of his birth might become politically embarrassing. In an effort to address this issue, Scott wrote, but never published, an autobiography. It was written somewhat as a diary, but well after the fact, in three or four sittings over a period of thirteen years from 1887 to 1900. The autobiography had a limited circulation but was sufficient to influence the press and the public figures who later referred to it when writing or talking about Scott's past. In the autobiography, Scott claimed George Scott as his father in order to explain why he had the Scott surname. He wrote that his father had died before he was born, thus explaining how his mother could marry John A. McDonald in 1871. George Scott was named as his father because, by the time Walter distributed his autobiography, George Scott was dead and could not contradict Walter's story. This account also protected Adam Scott (Walter's likely father), who lived until 1938. Moreover, it was unlikely that Adam would tell the world about his youthful indiscretion and his refusal to support his child. By the time Scott circulated his autobiography, Adam had married and was living in Oak Lake, Manitoba.

After moving West, Scott lived in dread of the day that someone from Strathroy would come and reveal his secret. Once he was in the midst of his political career, he could not afford to have anyone know about his past or he would be damaged politically. Even though there were hints in the western Conservative press from time to time that Scott was illegitimate, it is not clear that anyone truly knew about his past. In political circles of the day, it was common for political opponents to store up "dirt" on each other to be used at strategic moments. Scott's fear of exposure, and his repeated and continued denial of his true parentage until his death,

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Walter Scott as a successful businessman in his late twenties.

were signs that his illegitimacy was a troublesome thread throughout his life. Hence, it was a carefully guarded secret.

Scott, however, was not the only western politician with a secret. Frederick Haultain, territorial premier from 1891 until 1905 and leader of the opposition until 1912, had cherished a secret fondness for Marion Mackintosh, daughter of Lieutenant Governor Charles H. Mackintosh. Marion did not return Haultain's attentions but instead married Albert Castellain of Bath, England. They moved to England and had a daughter. Then the marriage dissolved, ending in divorce. On a trip to England, Haultain met Marion and they renewed their relationship. On the spur of the moment, they married in March 1906.[17] It was decided, however, that since Marion was a divorcee and somewhat unstable emotionally, she would continue to live in England until her health improved before making any marriage announcement to the Saskatchewan people. Unfortunately, Marion never did recover and thus did not return to Saskatchewan.

As the years went by, it became increasingly difficult for Haultain to admit to the people that he had been secretly married and had not told them. Marion Haultain eventually died at Homewood Sanitarium in 1938. After thirty-two years of marriage, Haultain never did tell his electors and friends in Saskatchewan about her. This was his secret which, if revealed, could have hurt him politically.

But Scott knew Haultain's secret. As early as 1901, Scott began to receive tips that Haultain was having a relationship with a young woman. A man named Culligan, a Liberal supporter, reported that if Haultain did not go to see his girlfriend every day while they were in England, she would be in a "terrible state." Scott was advised that all he had to do was "set the match" and "everything would go itself." The Reverend D.L. Oliver, a Scott supporter in Moosomin, reported that one of Haultain's supporters was embarrassed at the mention of Haultain's private life. Scott wrote to J.H. Haslam: "He [Haultain] was surely hobbled by some handicaps."

Scott knew that he could have damaged Haultain politically but chose not to. If he revealed Haultain's secret, could or would Haultain reveal Scott's secret in return? Scott did not know for sure whether Haultain knew about his background but he could not take the chance. Thus a conspiracy of silence appears to have

existed between the political rivals. It was only after both men had gone to their graves that researchers discovered the truth of these two politicians. Both men had been subject to life's experiences that were beyond the norm for that day and could not reveal their secrets to the public.

As the new century approached, Scott owned two newspapers and had equal partnership in a third. He covered elections and moved in political circles. He had some patronage influence for the Moose Jaw area and he associated with people such as Atkinson and Ross, two of the Liberal leaders in the North-West. The combination of newspapers and politics was a comfortable fit. As well, his roots in a rural, Presbyterian, English-speaking and Liberal Ontario community had strongly influenced his beliefs and values. Scott had worked on several farms as a young man, and he had gained a knowledge of agriculture and its importance to the economy and the lifestyle of the people. Scott was raised to believe that the secret to success on the farm was hard work. Honest labour could overcome even poor soil and weather conditions. The combination of Scott's rural roots and Saskatchewan's big skies and open spaces led him to believe that the future for his adopted province was unlimited. Now, fifteen years after arriving in the North-West, he was ready to launch his political career.

Chapter 3
Member of Parliament

[1900-1905]

Illustration by Grant Weike

I am nothing Mr. Speaker, but a poor man whom the electors of West Assiniboia have honoured by sending me here as their representative.

— Walter Scott, 1904

Walter Scott was involved in politics as a journalist, newspaper owner and Liberal Party activist soon after he arrived in Regina in 1886. In 1900, however, he became a candidate for elected office when he accepted the Liberal nomination for the federal constituency of Assiniboia West. In the ensuing election, Scott defeated his former friend, Nicholas Flood Davin, and thus began a five-year political apprenticeship during which he learned much from old political masters in Ottawa.

Scott was probably drawn into the Liberal Party out of political conviction along with the personal magnetism of Jim Ross, a Moose Jaw Liberal who became a lifelong friend. Upon writing to a constituent in 1903, Scott admitted that he was not inclined to be in politics: "I should never have been in it [politics] and would not stay in it at all but for Ross."

Scott was not the first western politician to transfer his newspaper skills and contacts to politics. Nicholas Flood Davin (member of Parliament for Assiniboia West), Clifford Sifton from Brandon (minister of the Interior from 1897-1905) and Frank Oliver of Edmonton (later minister of the Interior) were all owners and/or editors of newspapers in their areas.

When Scott accepted the nomination for the Assiniboia West federal riding on May 28, 1900, the constituency was a vast geographical rectangle stretching from the American border north to Saskatoon and from east of Regina to the west side of Medicine Hat. In the campaign, Scott battled the Conservative candidate, Nicholas Flood Davin. By 1900, it became apparent that the friendship between Davin and Scott had soured over Davin's stance on the Manitoba Schools Question some years before.

The Manitoba government of Thomas Greenway, had amended the Manitoba School Act in 1890, creating a publicly funded "national" school system, and withdrawing public funding for all denominational schools. Denominational schools were not abolished, but their supporters became subject to a system of double taxation. They had to bear the costs of operating their denominational schools, and also pay taxes to the public system.

Ten days after the passage of the amendments to the School Act, Archbishop Alexandre Taché petitioned the federal government to disallow the Greenway government amendments. Taché believed in the rights of the minority to organize Catholic schools which would be supported by the government. Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell ordered Premier Greenway to restore to Roman Catholics the right to have their own schools and to be exempt from state school taxation.

On June 17, 1895, Premier Greenway, seconded by his attorney general, Clifford Sifton, moved a motion in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly refusing to fulfill the prime minister's order. In the dying days of the Tupper government[1] in Ottawa, a Remedial Bill was introduced to reverse most of the Greenway School Act legislation of 1890.

Originally opposed to remedial legislation, Nicholas Flood Davin changed his mind and voted along Conservative Party lines, in favour of the Bill at Second Reading. The leader of the Opposition, Wilfrid Laurier, moved an amendment that "the bill be not now read a second time but six months hence." In the end, the remedial legislation did not pass the Canadian Parliament before the federal election. Four years later, Walter Scott raised this issue in his newspapers and in the 1900 federal election campaign against Davin. Scott followed the Liberal Party line in opposing the remedial legislation and accused Davin of saying one thing and doing another. The issue of religious schools would resurface during the debate on the Alberta and Saskatchewan Acts in 1905.

In the 1900 federal general election campaign, Scott promised in an open letter that, if elected, he would be independent of party lines and would defend the interests of the constituency. In the next sentence, Scott said that he was loyal to Laurier and supportive of the Liberal government's policies and program. Scott had dual loyalties. He knew that to be elected and subsequently re-elected, he had to represent the local interests and serve his constituents. However, in order to earn concessions for his constituency, it was advantageous for Scott to serve within the governing Liberal Party and be loyal to its leader. Philosophically, Scott accepted the basic principles of the Liberal Party. He openly supported a reduction in tariffs and urged more free trade. Scott claimed that he had not campaigned for the nomination but if elected, he promised to do his best. This disclaimer would be heard again five years later when he was chosen leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party.

In the 1900 federal election campaign in Assiniboia West, the two newspapers in Regina, the *Leader* (owned by Scott) and the *Standard* (owned by J.K. McInnis) both supported Scott. Some of the issues in the campaign were transportation, tariffs and sound fiscal policy. The Liberal government, according to the *Regina Leader*, in implementing the Crow's Nest Pass agreement, had lowered freight costs for farmers. Scott acknowledged that the government needed the tariff for revenue but promised to work for freer trade.

The *Regina Leader*, in an editorial on October 18, urged voters to support the Liberal government and not go back to the Conservatives who had "for a long time plundered and blundered, meddled and muddled." In a supplement to that same issue of the *Leader*, Scott wrote an open letter to the voters in Assiniboia West predicting that "provincial establishment" would likely arise in the next parliament. Scott believed that the North-West would need a strong representative during this period of change and promised he would give his constituency the necessary leadership. He said he would serve the needs of Assiniboia West before those of the party, unlike Davin's desertion of his constituents over the remedial legislation on the Manitoba Schools Question. Four days before the election, the *Regina Leader* proclaimed in a front-page headline: "Vote for Scott — Low Tariff, No Monopolies, British Preference, and North West First, Last, and Always."

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Frederick Haultain (1857-1942), leader of the North-West Territorial Assembly 1891-1897, and premier of the North-West Territories, 1897-1905.

The *Regina Leader*'s usual competition, the *Regina Standard*, strongly supported Scott's candidacy as well. The paper promoted the "Patrons of Industry" principles such as "tariff reform, reduced freight rates and abolition of monopolies," a platform similar to Scott's. An editorial in the *Standard* on October 17 described Scott as "thoroughly reliable," but the editor was not totally unbiased. In an open letter on October 24, J.K. McInnis mentioned his business friendship with Scott and predicted that Scott would be a man of deeds rather than words. In contrast, he criticized Davin for deserting the interests of his constituents over the remedial school legislation.

On November 7, 1900, Walter Scott defeated Nicholas Flood Davin by a majority of 232 votes, becoming the new MP for Assiniboia West.[2] J.A. Calder, a man who would become Scott's close friend and right-hand man, was the returning officer in Assiniboia West during the 1900 election.

Scott did not enter the political field with great confidence. His perceived lack of formal education and experience had "blighted" his hopes for an illustrious career. Scott was quick to compare his qualifications for the job with those of Frederick Haultain, who had nine years of experience as territorial leader and N.F. Davin, who had thirteen years as an MP. Both Haultain and Flood Davin had university degrees. Scott knew that he was up against able debaters, yet he tackled the task with enthusiasm and with the assistance of able campaigners such as Jim Ross. Despite his feelings of inadequacy — which he did not express publicly — Scott was off to Ottawa and it took some time for him to gain a sense of confidence in the House. During his first Session, according to the Honourable Clifford Sifton, Scott asked not to be the mover or the seconder of the "Address in Reply" motion, a sought after prize by most new members. He felt that this was a trial he did not want to undergo.

When first elected, Scott promised his constituents that he would represent them in a neutral and unbiased manner. He would speak on behalf of the Territories before respecting party lines. Even though he ran as a Liberal, politics, especially at the local level, was nonpartisan. Scott viewed Frederick Haultain, the nonpartisan leader of the territorial government, as a friend and colleague.[3] During the 1902 territorial election, Scott wrote: "I hope there may be no doubt about Haultain's return [re-election]." Haultain was misguided but "not a bad fellow." Scott felt that he and Haultain got along well, finding that Haultain was fair but a "keen fighter." Haultain was re-elected and together with Scott, continued the

battle in the defence of the North-West Territories. Haultain's biographer, Grant MacEwan, states that Haultain was the best debater in the West, a force to be reckoned with.[4]

Scott greatly admired Haultain as a public speaker, who did not seem to have to work as hard on his speeches. Rather than being a flamboyant speaker, Scott was able to make his points with less flare but with no less effectiveness. Scott, while still a neophyte politician, regarded Haultain as a role model. In the *Regina Leader* of September 30, 1897, he described Haultain as "punctiliously honest." To a Liberal colleague Scott wrote, "In my opinion there has never been in the Assembly, excepting Mr. Ross, a man who approached Haultain in point of ability to carry on efficiently and economically the affairs of the North-West."

The personal and political friendship between Haultain and Scott began to show some cracks after the territorial Conservative convention in Moose Jaw on March 25, 1903. The convention agreed to a resolution urging the party to run Conservative candidates in the next territorial general election. Partisan politics had been avoided up to this point, based on the logic that the Territories would have better lobbying power with the federal government if the territorial government was not aligned with a party in opposition to the federal government. The only sure way to avoid this conflict was to have a nonpartisan territorial legislative system.

The territorial Conservative convention in Moose Jaw was the first break with this nonpartisan tradition. The convention went even further in naming Frederick Haultain as the honorary president of the party. He quickly proclaimed his opposition to the party's stance on running candidates in the next election but he did not give up the title of honorary president, a fact which Scott publicly criticized. The result was the beginning of a rift between Scott and Haultain. To George Brown, a territorial member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) who became a lifelong political friend, Scott reported that before the convention, Haultain still seemed to be nonpartisan. Yet Haultain's reassurance after the convention of not following its resolution "fell a little short." Scott understood that Haultain did not want to offend his Conservative political friends but felt a sense of frustration with Haultain's apparent slide into partisan politics.

In these times, Scott claimed that it was acceptable to be partisan at the federal level while remaining nonpartisan at the territorial level. Scott expected Haultain, as territorial government leader, to maintain and proclaim his nonpartisanship but in Scott's opinion, Haultain had not done this. Doug Bocking concluded, "In the end, it was conflict of party interest which caused the break between Haultain and Scott."[5]

Grant MacEwan described Scott as "lean and deceptively frail in appearance" but very able. "He [Scott] became an astute politician as he had become an excellent journalist, but the early friendship with and admiration for Haultain seemed to dissolve in the corrosive acid of political partisanship." And further, "Scott ... was first and last a Liberal while Haultain, who could recognize some need for party organizations at the federal level, was as insistent as ever that party politics had no useful place in a provincial legislature."[6] Scott would have disagreed with MacEwan, arguing that Haultain had not maintained this nonpartisan stance after the Moose Jaw convention.

The gap between the two men widened and they became political rivals until retirement from politics. Perhaps if Haultain had become a partisan Liberal, Scott may have been more accepting. The criticism of Haultain was in part a sign of Scott's own increasing partisanship. Scott claimed to support nonparty local politics but was looking to blame the Conservatives for being the first to show party colours. This in turn would open the door for Liberal partisanship.

Although Haultain was proclaiming his nonpartisanship, he was gradually becoming more closely allied to the Conservative Party. The Liberals, including Scott, publicly chastised Haultain for his shift to partisan politics but privately were pleased with these developments. The Liberal Party wanted to run candidates in the first provincial election, but did not want to be blamed for being the first party to introduce partisan politics at the local level. By publicly noting Haultain's involvement at the Conservative territorial convention in Moose Jaw, the Liberals tried to shift this blame onto Haultain. As it turned out, in 1905 the Liberals ran party candidates while Haultain tried to maintain a nonpartisan facade by leading the Provincial Rights Party.

As Scott was balancing federal and territorial politics, what was his family's reaction to his election as a member of Parliament? Walter's mother, Isabella Telfer McDonald, wrote: "Dear Walter my dear boy." She had read his "lectures" from the election campaign and felt that he must be "quite a publick [*sic*] speaker." She concluded her letter:

> Well Walter, I little thought when you left that cold March morning to go to the North West you would some day be in parlement [*sic*]. ... I sincerely hope the Lord may still be with you and prosper you in all your undertakings and that you may acknowledge him in all your ways.

Walter Scott maintained a closeness with his mother, corresponding frequently. He signed his letters to her as "Your affectionate son." Walter stopped at his home district near Strathroy on many of his trips between Regina and Ottawa.

Jessie Scott, accompanying her husband to Ottawa during Session, lived in rented rooms not far from Parliament Hill. Walter reported to a colleague that Mrs. Scott (he always referred to her by her family name rather her given name) was not impressed with Ottawa at first but was getting used to it.

Since federal politics in the early decades of the twentieth century were not a full-time occupation for MPs, Scott had time to pursue other interests. Session lasted approximately six weeks each winter, with long breaks for work in the constituency. As a result, Scott maintained his ownership of, and direct involvement with, both the *Moose Jaw Times* and the *Regina Leader*. The newspapers were not only a source of income but also a way of spreading the "word" to the voters in the constituency. The *Leader*, for example, reported faithfully on Scott's speeches in the House of Commons as he defended territorial interests. The paper portrayed him as the humble servant of his constituents. According to the May 18, 1904 *Leader*, Scott said: "I am nothing Mr Speaker, but a poor man whom the electors of West Assiniboia have honoured by sending me here as their representative."

According to the paper, Scott raised concerns about shoddy workmanship in the construction of railway lines in the North-West, a problem caused, of course, by the previous Conservative government. In the same week, Scott spoke in favour of pay increases for the men in the North West Mounted Police. Overall, the general theme of Scott's speeches was to raise concerns on behalf of his constituents and for the improved federal service to the North-West. His newspaper ensured that constituents knew about these valiant efforts of the member for Assiniboia West.

It was important to have as many newspapers as possible in Liberal hands, and, in Scott's mind, to have Liberal newspapers in the language of the new immigrants, particularly German. This enabled these voters to maintain their traditionally close ties with the Liberal Party. If Scott could not afford to buy a newspaper, it was important to arrange for someone loyal to the party to buy it so that the newspaper would not fall into "enemy" hands.

In spite of his initial shyness, Scott settled into his role as the elected member for Assiniboia West. He spoke on issues germane to the North-West, particularly agriculture and autonomy for the North-West Territories. In May 1903, George W. Brown, a territorial MLA and a barrister with Mackenzie and Brown in Regina, wrote that autonomy should be delayed because the Liberals were in disarray and Haultain was becoming more partisan for the Conservatives.

One year later, Scott wrote to political colleagues that as long as federal funding was adequate, the people in the territories would likely be content to stay as a territory. On the other hand, Haultain, as leader of the territorial government, made provincehood for the territories the central issue in the 1902 territorial election. The territorial politicians argued that their government was not given enough money from the federal treasury to pay for the necessary infrastructure (roads, bridges or schools) to meet the needs of the new settlers. Provincial status would allow the provincial government to raise revenues and to borrow money to cover the increasing costs. Scott and the Liberal Party initially delayed autonomy, an issue they did not deem as urgent. In November 1903, Scott wrote to Clifford Sifton, minister of the Interior, that "so long as the schools and roads and bridges requirements [*sic*] are being met, the people express no desire for haste with the provincial establishment."

Scott shared Brown's concern over Haultain's growing partisanship. By November 1904, Scott had lost confidence in Haultain, believing that he was "controlled by the Conservative party interests." Scott could see that autonomy was inevitable, but as long as the Liberal Party was disorganized in the West, provincial status would be avoided. The Liberals knew that the residents of settlements along the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) who came West under a Conservative government tended to vote Conservative, while the new settlers brought in by the Liberal government were more inclined to vote Liberal. With careful organization, time was on the side of the Liberals as more settlers poured into the prairie West. Within two years, Scott believed that the circumstances had changed sufficiently to warrant provincial status for Saskatchewan and Alberta. Even though he had changed his stance on provincehood within two years, Scott had been consistent in his belief that autonomy should not come until the Liberal

Party had a reasonable chance of being elected government in the new province of Saskatchewan.

One of the major points of contention between Scott and the Laurier government was tax exemption for CPR land. The Macdonald government had granted twenty-five million acres of land to the CPR as a partial payment for the construction of the main rail line across Canada. Macdonald had promised that the land selected by the railway would remain untaxed for twenty years or until sold, whichever came first. Laurier refused to budge from this position, even though it had been a Conservative commitment, because "a promise was a promise." Both Laurier and Scott knew, however, that if the government broke the contract with the CPR, it would have to pay compensation. If Scott could not have the exemption removed, reimbursement to the territorial government for lost revenue was an acceptable alternative. Publicly Scott supported the removal of the exemption but privately he lobbied for financial compensation.

Scott spoke in the House of Commons on this point on several occasions. For example, on October 14, 1903, Scott, in debate, said that since many millions of acres were exempt from taxation, the North-West would be "simply crazy at present to accept autonomy." By October 1904, in an open letter to his constituents, Scott reaffirmed his stance against autonomy until the tax exemption was resolved: "I shall oppose the granting of autonomy until we know exactly where we stand in this tax exemption matter, or unless Parliament in giving autonomy makes us free from the burden and the handicap which perpetual exemption from taxation on the CPR roadbed and all appertenances [*sic*] would mean in a province."

Meanwhile, Scott was using his persuasive influence to gather more funding for the territories. If Haultain was going to work against the Liberals, the best way to undercut him was for the Liberals to maintain the federal grants to the territories at a high level. Haultain would then have "no excuse for complaint." Scott wrote: "My position is that the greater likelihood there is of Haultain endeavouring to use the North-West Government against the interests of the Liberal Party, the greater reason there is to prevent him stating with truth that the North-West is being starved by the Liberal Party." Scott had learned the art of compromise. He pressed his point on tax exemption but settled for compensation, and with this compromise, he was able to stay within the Liberal Party.

In the midst of the debate over autonomy and funding for the territorial government, a controversy arose over whether the Liberals were trying to buy off the territorial leader and appoint him as a judge. Grant MacEwan, when describing the incident, wrote that Jim Ross offered a judgeship to Haultain, an action that was unsolicited by Haultain. Historian D.J. Hall argued that one of the ways to solve the Liberal problem with Haultain in the West was to buy him off, but the attempt failed.[7] Walter Scott had a very different interpretation of events. He wrote to Jim Ross suggesting that it was Haultain who had asked for the judgeship. In fact, Haultain was talking about the appointment to such an extent that Scott was worried "the common impression will be that the Ottawa Government was trying to get him [Haultain] out of politics." Clifford Sifton wrote to Scott saying that he was not surprised that Haultain had backed out on the appointment.

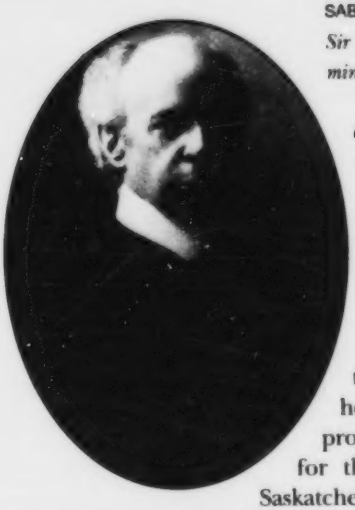
By June 14, 1904, it was clear to Scott that Haultain was to blame for the mess. "He (Haultain) got Ross and I to arrange his appointment to the Bench, and then wouldn't accept appointment." There are obviously two interpretations to the events, Haultain's and Scott's. It is likely that, in conversation, Haultain mentioned to Ross that he might be interested in getting out of politics after so many years if a suitable appointment was available. The Liberals, seeing Haultain go to the Conservatives and becoming a thorn in their sides, were anxious to accommodate him and to neutralize him politically. It appears as if Haultain got cold feet and declined the offer once it had materialized. The Liberals were embarrassed at the failed attempt to neutralize their political foe, so the gloves were certainly off for the next political battle.

By 1903, Scott had become a seasoned and valued team member in the Liberal Party. Clifford Sifton, the most powerful federal politician for all of the North-West, relied on Scott as a loyal, hard-working party member. Sifton wrote to Scott about an area in southern Alberta where there had been some political feuding which needed to be dealt with: "I think you should go down there for a few days. I have no one else to depend upon, and it will not do to leave it too late."

As in many political matters, issues can change rapidly. With the 1904 federal election campaign underway, and with Haultain taking a more partisan approach to politics, Scott began to change his mind regarding the urgency of autonomy. During the campaign, Laurier promised that if his government was re-elected, it would open autonomy talks with the territorial government. This campaign promise would undercut any gains made in the West by Haultain and the Conservatives. Therefore, the moment for autonomy had arrived for the Liberals.

After the 1904 re-election of the Laurier Liberals, including Scott, the stage was set for the autonomy talks.[8] The first point of contention was whether to divide the territories into one or two provinces. Haultain had been pushing for one large province from Manitoba's western boundary to the Rocky Mountains. This included four districts in the existing Territories which could be directed by a central provincial government. According to Haultain, one province would provide economical and efficient government. Since it had already been administered for several decades by one local government, it was clearly not too big to be a province. Supporters of the two-province concept believed that one large province, due to its size, would "result in jealousies and frictions detrimental to Canadian unity." Furthermore, two provinces would provide more patronage opportunities.

The second major issue surrounding autonomy was the transfer of Crown land to the new provinces. On October 13, 1903, Scott stated clearly in the House of Commons that he favoured a transfer of Crown land to the provinces: "It is only fair, just and proper that the lands, timber and mineral resources in that province should be handed over to the people dwelling there to be managed and owned by them."[9] By 1905, Scott admitted that he had changed his mind (another compromise) and that he favoured the federal government maintaining ownership of the land so as to ensure proper funding to the provinces: "It is absolutely better for the people of those new provinces to have the lands administered here [Ottawa], so long as the provinces obtain a sufficient sum in lieu of lands to place them in an



SAB R-B1059

Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1841-1919), Scott's mentor, and prime minister of Canada, 1896-1911.

equitable position to carry on their educational system, their public works, and generally, their local affairs." Scott believed that the public lands should be in the national interest which was necessary for the provinces to survive.

The federal government retained administration of the public lands in Saskatchewan and Alberta not just for railway construction but also to ensure continuity of the federal government's homestead policy. In lieu of control of the land, the provinces were granted compensation. The formula for the acreage and price was set arbitrarily.[10] In Saskatchewan and Alberta, twenty-five million acres were identified at a cost of $1.50 per acre, which established a fund of $37.5 million per province. Since a sliding scale of interest on this fund, based on population, was set, this was an "interest payment upon this compensation fund which the Dominion proposed to grant in return for lands retained for the 'purposes of the Dominion.'"[11]

With the acceptance of this compensation package, Scott concurred with the Laurier party line. There does not appear to have been major internal political pressure on Scott to compromise. It was better for the federal government to administer the land in order to ensure the continued rapid immigration policy for the development of the West. If the provinces held the land, they would not have cash at hand for the necessary public works. There was also the concern by the Liberals that the provinces might disrupt the immigration policy that was just showing results in the number of immigrants flooding into the North-West. Furthermore, the provinces would have to be involved in the promotion of immigration on an international basis if they held the Crown lands. Scott took the long view when he wrote that he could not see a time when "there can ever be financial advantage to the Province in taking over the lands." When the immigration policy was at its logical end and the land was all settled, the federal government might then want to turn the land over to the provinces, but for what advantage to them?

Why then did Scott do an about-face on the Crown lands issue? By 1905, with two elections under his belt, Scott was less inclined to strain on the party leash and more inclined to follow Laurier's policies on immigration. Scott had learned the benefits of playing with a team. Clifford Sifton's aggressive recruitment of newcomers to the Canadian North-West was paying dividends in the rapid growth of the prairie region. Canada had become one of the fastest growing countries in the world and Scott supported rapid settlement in the West.[12]

The debate over the advisability of turning the Crown lands over to the provinces has raged on ever since. The three prairie provinces were the only provinces that, on joining Confederation, did not receive their lands and mineral

resources, which created a sense of dependency and western alienation. Chester Martin, a Canadian historian and an adviser to the Manitoba government on the land question, argued that because the federal government kept the land, it became a large empire in its own right, thus disrupting the concept of equality of provinces.[15] The federal government was prepared to sacrifice the local interests for the sake of the country as a whole. Martin concludes, however, that the Dominion Lands Policy was good for the West in the long term because the arrangement provided speedy yet controlled development of the western land. The question is whether the provinces, starved for cash, would have avoided cultivation on non-arable land as much as the federal government had. Even though the provinces were provided with cash, in lieu of the land, feelings of alienation were prevalent.

The final and most contentious issue in the autonomy debate pertained to separate schools. In Canadian politics, for the first four decades in the history of the new nation, religion and education were inflammatory issues, especially when mixed together. From 1875 to 1901, through a series of ordinances, the territorial government centralized the school system under a board of education headed by a commissioner (minister). Quebec protested to Ottawa about these changes, but the federal government refused to interfere. Even though the ordinance reserved one-half hour at the end of the school day for religious education, the board of education set the curriculum and the standards which were uniform throughout the system for public and separate schools. The candidates did not debate the "schools question" in the 1904 election campaign. Both parties wanted to avoid the resulting clash if the subject came up. Only the *Toronto News* raised the issue but this was not enough to inflame a wider debate.

Once the autonomy bills came before the House of Commons on February 21, 1905, the members could no longer avoid the separate school issue. Scott was quick to state his position: "It is my intention to support a continued guarantee of exactly the same force as has existed in the NWT constitution since 1875." These words are remarkably similar to those of Laurier when he spoke in the House of Commons at second reading of the bill, but it was not clear what they meant. Was Scott referring to the system of separate administrations for the two school systems as existed in 1875, or the combined system established by the Territorial Assembly by way of Ordinance in 1901? Scott supported the separate schools as they existed: "I shall support precisely the guarantee now possessed by minorities and no more." If this meant "as existed" in 1901 or 1905, why then did he specifically refer to 1875, a date before the Territorial amendments? He was somewhat more specific in a letter to J.G. Black on February 27, 1905:

> We can stand for separate schools as we have them under strict public control but we cannot stand for a separate system of schools as exist in Ontario and such as existed in Manitoba until 1890.

Scott followed a thin line in the school clauses debate. He described himself as a "violent" opponent of private schools, yet favoured the protection of the rights of minorities. The final version of the bills satisfied Scott's distinction between the rights of the minorities and a full public school system. The Liberal Party faced a tough dilemma over the school clauses. Section 93 of the British North America

Act, 1867 specified that each provincial legislature "may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education," subject to certain conditions. One of the conditions was that a province could not pass a law which would "prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union."

In line with the tradition of Edward Blake and Oliver Mowat, the Liberals were the defenders of provincial rights but in like manner believed in the individual rights of the minorities to have their own "denominational schools."[14] They had taken pride in opposing the Conservative stance of forging a strong centralized government for Canada. Nevertheless, in 1905, Laurier's autonomy bills safeguarded the rights of Roman Catholics to have separate schools supported by public taxation, as had been defined by law in 1875. Those who opposed Laurier's bill wanted no special protection of minority rights enshrined in the constitution of the new provinces. Others would accept only recognition of the diminution of minority rights as had evolved between 1875 and 1904. The Liberals ultimately favoured the continuation of the school system that had existed just prior to the formation of the two new provinces in 1905. The citizens of Ontario and Quebec, the battleground for ultra-Protestants and Roman Catholics, debated the school question more than the people in western Canada.

The issue of separate schools was important for the Liberals because they relied on Roman Catholic support both in Quebec and in the territories. Historian Manoly Lupul wrote much later that Laurier had promised Monseigneur Sbarretti, the Papal Delegate of the Catholic Church, that if he did not raise the separate school issue in the 1904 election, Laurier would be inclined to grant greater religious freedom in the school system in the new provinces that were about to be created.[15] The negotiations behind the scenes regarding the school clauses in the autonomy bills were complex but the Liberals were determined to avoid another Manitoba schools crisis. On January 14, 1905, Wilfrid Laurier invited Jim Ross and Walter Scott, two of the more prominent Liberals from the Territories, to his office to discuss provisions of the autonomy bills. Clifford Sifton, minister of the Interior, having seen an early draft of the bills, left for the southern United States, content that the bills met with his approval. Laurier had not mentioned the school clauses before Sifton left.

On January 14, 1905, Scott wrote that he was not sure about some of the provisions in the bills: "I have had very little chance to talk to other Ministers about Autonomy." Yet Scott doubted that anything would proceed until Sifton's return. Both Scott and Sifton were in the dark as to the actual provisions of the bills. They did not become aware of these details until Prime Minister Laurier introduced the bills in the House of Commons. It became apparent that Sbarretti and Charles Fitzpatrick, minister of Justice (also a Roman Catholic), had been involved in drafting the school clauses of the bill.[16] When word reached Sifton that the bills had been introduced, he returned to Ottawa. Scott believed that the bills were satisfactory until Sifton returned home and raised the alarm: "Until the row started we were not aware of any distinction and were ready to accept Section 14 [*sic* 16]. Sifton thinks there is a distinction."

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Clifford Sifton (1861-1929), minister of the Interior in the Laurier administration, 1896-1905

When Laurier refused to back down from his position, Sifton resigned from cabinet on February 27. Even though Laurier had stated in the House of Commons that the bills maintained the existing school situation, Sifton argued that they pushed the school situation in the North-West back to 1875, thus giving more independence and control to the minorities, particularly the Roman Catholics. Sifton wanted a national school system without separate schools at all, and thus was not prepared to accept Laurier's proposed bills. Scott argued: "We have separate schools but not a separate system, which makes all the difference in the world." On March 10, Scott wrote to a supporter that the Liberals and, in fact, all Canadians were a mixed family. The only way to keep peace was to leave the school system as it was in 1905, thus avoiding private religious schools.

Sifton had experience in controversial separate school debates. He had become attorney general in the Greenway government of Manitoba in 1891, one year after the provincial legislature passed the controversial amendments to the School Act. As attorney general, Sifton led the government's defence of its school legislation in the courts and became a firm supporter of a national school system.

The Liberals, rather than having a noncontroversial debate over autonomy, were now divided on religious grounds with one cabinet minister out of cabinet and another, W.S. Fielding, minister of Finance, threatening to go as well. Scott did not believe that Laurier was involved in any backroom dealing with the Catholic Church:

> Had the Education clause been what we were promised,— and I think Laurier fully believed that nothing more was meant or guaranteed by Section 16 of the Bills,— there would have been no Sifton resignation and I am sure there would have been not a murmur from the North-West.

Scott called the wording of the education clauses "unfortunate" and believed that the whole situation could have been avoided except for "unpardonable stupidity or unpardonable selfishness." Scott blamed two Roman Catholic members — Charles Fitzpatrick, and Senator J.W. Scott — for the entire political mess: "There has been a very direct and distinct conflict between what Fitzpatrick wnated [*sic*] and what we were willing to grant." Scott was disheartened by the whole situation: "The confidence which it took a lifetime for Laurier to win in the English Provinces has been destroyed, or at least dangerously weakened, in a week."

Sifton agreed to work with several members to draft an amendment that would

satisfy him and his supporters. Rather than pushing the rights of separate school supporters back to 1875, the compromise was to set the rights as had been established by territorial ordinance in 1901. This compromise was enshrined in the Autonomy Bills, but Sifton did not return to cabinet. There is dispute amongst historians as to whether Sifton actually received an invitation to return to cabinet, but the fact remains that he served the remainder of his parliamentary career as a private member. Scott believed that Sifton's resignation had not been absolutely necessary, but perhaps Sifton was tired of cabinet and ready to resign. The school clauses were the issues that he could use to resign while bringing about a policy change on a subject for which he had strong feelings.

Even though the parliamentarians compromised on the school question, Scott still had one other unresolved point — the railways. From the time he was first elected to the House of Commons, Scott spoke out against any further government land grants to the railways:

> Generosity to the railway companies, generosity to Ontario, to British Columbia, to Manitoba, if you like; our lands were taken to build roads in all of these provinces, our lands were taken to make these railway corporations rich.[17]

Furthermore, he wrote to W.M. Martin, another MP, "an enormous area of Western prairie lands was alienated for the general benefit of Canada." Scott urged the government not to make any additional grants to railways unless it was prepared to set a maximum limit on the freight rates to prevent "gouging." In Scott's eyes, the railways had made excessive profits on the backs of the prairie provinces and resented the impression left by the railways that they ran the country.

As an indication that Scott was in step with the Laurier government, no further tax exempt land was granted after 1896. Scott had used his influence to gain a compensation package for the territorial government in lieu of the tax on railway land. When the Autonomy Bills were before Parliament, Scott proposed, at the committee stage, an amendment to eliminate the tax exemption on railway lands, publicly vowing to resign if the amendment did not pass. The committee defeated the amendment and Scott, good to his word, submitted his resignation to the prime minister on May 16, 1905. Laurier persuaded Scott to withhold his resignation, but Scott resigned again after the defeat of his amendment at the third reading stage. Again his resignation was held in abeyance.

One of the first decisions to be made for the new province was the location for the seat of government. In 1883, the federal government moved the capital of the North-West Territories from Battleford to Regina to be on the main line of the CPR. It seemed logical to many that the capital would remain in Regina with the formation of the province. However, there were other centres in Saskatchewan which dreamed of becoming the capital city. The Saskatchewan Act, as passed by Parliament, named Regina as the provisional capital subject to final decision by the province's Executive Council. In his speech on moving the bill in the House of Commons, Laurier stated that there was some doubt as to whether the capital of

Alberta should be Edmonton or Calgary; Edmonton became the provisional capital subject to ratification. In the case of Saskatchewan, Laurier believed that Regina was the obvious choice but left the final decision to the province.

Even before the introduction in Parliament of the autonomy legislation, Scott wrote to a constituent that he had no doubt about the capital question: "I do not think there is much doubt now about Regina being the permanent capital." He confirmed this view in a letter to James Balfour, a prominent lawyer in Regina, but urged Reginans not to become too vocal or boastful about gaining capital city status. Parliament had established the electoral boundaries for the first election, which weighted the seats in favour of the northern half of the province. The northern seats contained approximately two-thirds the number of voters compared to the constituencies south of the CPR main line. As a result, fewer voters were required in the northern ridings to elect a member to the Legislative Assembly.[18] Officially, the reason given for this imbalance was that the northern seats were growing faster than those in the south. The inequity would be temporary. The Liberals knew that new immigrants settling in the northern section were more likely to support the Liberal Party than the more established settlers along the CPR line who tended to vote Conservative. The Liberals wanted the boundaries to give them the edge in the first election even though the population did not support such a distribution. In the end, the north received nine seats and the south sixteen. If the southern Saskatchewan members, once elected, voted on the choice of capital, it seemed obvious that they would vote for a southern rather than a central or northern centre. The Liberals wanted to have enough seats in the north to aid them in winning the election, but enough support in the south to have the capital stay in Regina. It was a delicate balancing act. By July 1905, Scott was anxious that Reginans not arouse jealousies in other competing sites

> The time for the Regina people to act will be when the first Legislature is in session and it seems to me that the worst possible thing the Regina people can do just now is to indulge in talk based on the idea that we have a patent right on the capital.

If Scott was concerned about a centre other than Regina being chosen, he did not express it. He was confident that the capital city would stay right where it was.

Another important decision for the federal and provincial Liberals was who should be the provincial leader. On July 6, when Scott met Laurier in his office, Laurier knew that the Saskatchewan provincial Liberals had decided to field candidates in the first election and that he needed a strong person to carry the Liberal flag in that fledgling province.

There is no record of what was said at the meeting, but it became known that Scott left his resignation in abeyance after the defeat of the railway tax exemption amendments and continued sitting as a member of Parliament. It seems clear that Laurier asked Scott not to resign and further embarrass the government, which was still dealing with Sifton's recent resignation and the subsequent split in the ranks. Laurier almost certainly asked Scott to let his name stand as Liberal leader in the new province of Saskatchewan.

What was Scott's relationship with Laurier? Scott was not a "pushover" in caucus or in the House of Commons. He was a loyal Liberal but he also defended his principles to the point of standing up to the prime minister on the school clauses and the railway tax exemption provisions in the Autonomy Bills. However, it does not seem as if Scott was on the fringe of the party. Laurier consulted Scott from time to time to seek his opinion. Scott was not a party rebel, but in order to remain credible in his constituency, he had to represent western interests. Even though Scott defended territorial concerns, he accepted compromise and won federal compensation for CPR tax exempt land. Scott also won on the establishment of the school system as it existed in 1905. He balanced territorial interests with federal Liberal policy. The compromise permitted him to stay in the party and to remain popular with his electors.

On the other hand, Laurier did not choose Scott as the new minister of the Interior when Sifton resigned. Perhaps Laurier could not replace Sifton with Scott, since he had worked closely with Sifton. Was Scott considered for the cabinet post? To P.M. Bredt of Regina, Scott hinted that he was supporting Greenway, Oliver, or Turriff for the post of minister of the Interior rather than taking on this responsibility himself. He revealed that "I am perhaps myself to some extent responsible for the selection [of Oliver]." Yet Scott confided to G.W. Brown: "I have no intimation as to Laurier's intention but of course will not be greatly surprised to be sent for myself." Even though he did not want to admit it, it seems that Scott was secretly hoping that he would get the call to enter the Laurier cabinet, but this call did not come. To his half-brother, John, Walter admitted:

> I am not looking for it [the cabinet post]. I see very clearly that there is more work and worry than compensation or satisfaction in such a position, but of course some victim will have to be found and I would not say absolutely that I would refuse it under certain conditions.

Had Scott gone into Cabinet, the necessary by-election,[19] in Scott's estimation, would have been an easy victory for him but such was not to be. Scott claimed that he had no regrets in not being chosen for cabinet. Laurier's friend and biographer, O.D. Skelton, described Walter Scott as having "much promise" and that Laurier held him in warm affection.[20] From all outward appearances, Scott and Laurier had a close working relationship, even though they disagreed on several key policies. In the end, they were able to find a compromise they both could live with. This friendship would last their lifetimes.

When was Scott first approached about becoming Liberal leader? On November 13, 1904, Scott wrote to the Liberal secretary in Moose Jaw, W.E. Seaborn, acknowledging that he (Scott) had been approached to run for leader. Scott felt that G.H.V. Bulyea would be the strongest candidate for the job,[21] observing that while Bulyea was not "spectacular," he was "straight and sound." By February 1905, Scott was still considering the Liberal leadership. However, he doubted his own capacity to do the job. With all the work and worries involved, why would a person seek to become premier? By August 18, 1905, after the Saskatchewan Liberal convention that chose Scott as leader, he wrote to a colleague that he would find it hard to leave Ottawa but "the finger of duty seemed to point very clearly in the local direction."

Why did Laurier choose Scott? On June 30, Scott wrote that the "Chief" [Laurier] still favoured Haultain but that Laurier was meeting opposition from some of his own supporters. The concern was that Haultain appeared, to many Liberals, as a Conservative. Haultain had to decide in which province to seek election. His territorial constituency of Macleod, where he had his own electoral base, was in the new province of Alberta, yet his residence and law practice were in Regina. Haultain finally chose to maintain his roots in Regina and sought election in Saskatchewan. This meant that the Liberals had to choose someone who could compete against him. Some Liberal insiders considered Calder for leader, but George Brown, for one, doubted that Calder could beat Haultain. Calder, the former deputy commissioner of Education in the Haultain administration, and later a Regina lawyer, was a great "detail" person but lacked the public flourish to capture the imagination of the people. By June 1905, Scott seemed assured of taking on the leadership of the provincial Liberal party. Yet he had to reassure his local colleagues that he had not campaigned for the position: "The truth is that I had absolutely no idea in the world of going into local politics." Scott had experience and leadership qualities that Brown admired. And so Brown, in July 1905, urged Scott to give Ottawa up because there were not many opportunities for him there. If Scott were to become leader, he could always return to federal politics at a later time. Scott replied that even if he was asked to be leader, he was not sure he would accept the invitation.

Liberals considered Bulyea for the leader's post. Scott believed that Bulyea could do a good job, and he had been faithful to the Liberal Party during the difficult nonpartisan years in the territorial Legislative Assembly. However, Scott had doubts about Bulyea's ability to rally the people of Saskatchewan to defeat Haultain. Haultain was clearly the competition. A sound, energetic and popular leader had to be found to defeat him.

Scott had to be careful how he managed the convention and his leadership bid. Five days before the convention, he wrote: "It seems to be much better that no statement on the subject [of leadership of the party] should emanate from myself." The background work would have to come from others. Within a week of the convention, Scott began to show some optimism that the leader's post was his. He wrote: "I am sorry to have to say that it begins to look as if I might be obliged to leave Ottawa for a time at least." Scott kept denying that he was a possible candidate for the position but did nothing to stop others who were promoting his leadership. Scott knew that he lacked the education that Haultain and others had, but he was honoured to be considered by his party.

There is no record that Laurier invited Scott to be Liberal leader on July 6 but the timing seems correct. Scott had been disappointed when Laurier had not invited him into cabinet after Sifton resigned. Maybe this invitation to be Liberal leader in Saskatchewan was too good to pass up. He could always return to Ottawa and federal politics at some time in the future when he tired of the local scene. The lure of a new beginning in his adopted province was too much to resist and Scott decided to take on the challenge. On August 5, eleven days before the convention, Scott wrote to Laurier: "From what I have been able to learn since arriving here

[Regina], I fancy that the proceedings may result in harmony with the suggestions which were discussed with you a couple of weeks ago." The suggestions must have been Laurier's offer on July 6 that Scott become Liberal leader. The wheels were in motion for a successful convention and the beginning of a new chapter in Scott's political career.

August 1905 was a crucial month for the formation of provincial political parties in Saskatchewan and Alberta. The provincial Liberals held their conventions in Alberta (August 3, 1905) and Saskatchewan (August 16, 1905). The Liberals at both conventions "declared their determination to contest the provincial elections on federal party lines."[22] The Liberals claimed that this step was in response to the provincial Conservatives' decision in Moose Jaw in 1903 to organize along party lines and accused the Conservatives of being the first to practice partisan politics.

The provincial Conservatives held conventions in Alberta (August 16, 1905) and Saskatchewan (August 25, 1905). The Alberta Conservatives declared their intention to follow the Liberal lead and to run Conservative candidates in the next provincial election. At the Saskatchewan Conservative convention, Haultain declared his support for nonpartisan candidates.

When Scott had entered the House of Commons in 1900, he had been shy and reluctant to enter debate, but after nearly five years, he had become more comfortable in parliamentary debate. He had been a representative of the southern and western segment of the new province and was well known, certainly in Liberal circles. Scott had proven that he was sound in judgement, able to raise points of principle but willing to accept compromise and party policies. Judging by the reception he received when he attended the Liberal convention which met in Regina on August 16, 1905, he was a popular leader. It was a crowd of 300 enthusiastic Liberals, ready to choose a leader and, in all probability, the first premier of Saskatchewan. There was only one nomination for leader — Walter Scott. The motion to name him leader was unanimous and greeted by a round of cheers and applause. The *Regina Leader*, a paper still owned by Scott, reported enthusiastically: "Round after round of cheers, accompanied by the waving of hats, prevented Mr. Scott from speaking for some little time, and his first attempt at utterance only provoked another round of cheers." The farm boy from Strathroy had arrived. The people wanted to be led into a new tomorrow. Scott promised the cheering crowd:

> We shall present to them, good government, clean government, honest government, and, so far as I have the energy and ability for it, progressive government shall be given the people of this province.

Scott later indicated to a colleague that he had been approached by many within the party, including the prime minister, to be the leader, and when the convention was unanimous in choosing him, he could not refuse. It was true that many had encouraged Scott to run for the leader's post and he had decided at least a month before the convention that he wanted the job. However, he was careful not to appear to be campaigning for it. Instead, he was in a better position to lead if it looked as if he had been persuaded by the cheering throng to take on

the challenge. Scott was leading because they had asked him to lead. In his correspondence, he was quick to point out that there were many responsibilities in being provincial leader, but with "the assistance of the energetic aid of all the good friends throughout the Province," victory could be achieved.

The new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan came into being on September 1, 1905. However, Saskatchewan had to wait until September 4 for the official party of Governor General Grey to arrive in Regina for the inaugural ceremonies, when A.-E. Forget was sworn in as the lieutenant-governor.[23] Forget, former clerk of the territorial Legislative Assembly and territorial lieutenant-governor, became Saskatchewan's first representative of the Crown and of the federal government. Under the authority of sections 8 and 10 of the Saskatchewan Act, Forget had the responsibility to choose an interim premier who would form a government and recommend the date for the first provincial election. The Canadian Parliament had established the provincial electoral boundaries, subject to alteration in subsequent years by the provincial Legislative Assembly.

There had been much speculation preceding the selection of the first premier. One school of thought argued that the lieutenant-governor was a nonpartisan position and was there to represent the sovereign. As such, since Frederick Haultain had been the government leader in the North-West Territories and was a popular figure in the new province, he should be chosen premier. The other school of thought contended that the Liberal leader was the obvious choice because the lieutenant-governor was the servant of the federal government. Like Haultain, Scott had parliamentary experience. Wanting to maintain his public image of not interfering with provincial matters, Prime Minister Laurier stated that it was up to the lieutenant-governor to choose a desirable candidate to be premier. On the day following the inaugural ceremony, Forget called on Thomas Walter Scott to form the first provincial government. Forget later argued that he had chosen the leader of the party that had a majority of members sitting in the former Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories. However, it is also clear that Scott was Laurier's choice. Haultain would have to wait for the first election to offer himself to the people and win the premier's chair.

The support for Scott as Liberal leader and premier was not unanimous. In an editorial in the August 18, 1905 *Winnipeg Tribune*, Haultain was portrayed as the "victim of a Quebec conspiracy." The editorial writer claimed that with a French-Canadian prime minister and a French-Canadian lieutenant-governor, Scott was obviously the product of a Quebec conspiracy. Although Scott was not Roman Catholic, critics alleged that given the circumstances of his selection as premier, it was obvious that he would be sympathetic to the Catholic cause in the West.

It was not only the Conservative press that had some doubts about Scott taking on the leadership. There is no evidence to show that Jessie Scott actively participated in political rallies or, in fact, the leadership convention. Scott wrote to a colleague that Mrs. Scott believed that in an election one should envy the defeated candidate and his wife. Jessie Scott had had a tough adjustment to living in Ottawa,

with all of the travelling back and forth to Regina. Now she was faced with the beginning of an entirely new political career for her husband. She avoided the press and did not want to have articles written about her. Whether she was content in the shadows seems doubtful but she did not complain. Her preference was likely for her husband to return to the newspaper business and to leave politics, but this was not to be. The people of Saskatchewan had issued the call and Scott had risen to meet the challenge. There was an advantage for the Scotts, however, now that their adopted daughter, Dorothy, was in school — living in Regina would mean less travel.[24]

The debate over the lieutenant-governor's choice of premier continued through the election campaign in December 1905. Regardless of whether it was proper for the Queen's representative to choose a Liberal as premier, the fact is that the federal Liberals would have been foolish to choose a Conservative as the first premier. Although initially supported by Laurier, Haultain had alienated the prime minister over the decisions of one versus two provinces, the school question, and the allocation of Crown lands. When Haultain openly campaigned for the Conservatives in two by-elections in Ontario in 1905, it was clear to Liberals that Haultain, for all his nonpartisan talk, was a Conservative.

The federal Liberals believed that it was vital to have control of patronage for the first election. To have given Haultain the premiership would have been like giving him the keys to the store. Even though, by law, an election was to be called within six months, no chances could be taken. Notwithstanding Laurier's public protestations that it was a decision for the lieutenant-governor to choose the premier, it seems clear that Laurier exercised influence behind the scenes. Laurier chose the Liberal he felt would defeat Frederick Haultain — Walter Scott.

Scott had matured since he entered Parliament in 1900. He had learned the key elements of survival in politics. Even though he did not have the formal schooling that many of his peers had, he could think and speak while he was on his feet and he had accurate political instincts. From his apprenticeship in Ottawa, he had learned the art of delay. He favoured delaying provincehood for Alberta and Saskatchewan until the people in the North-West Territories were ready for it. Scott learned to act on principle only if there was sure public support. Radical new policies should be initiated only when the people were ready.

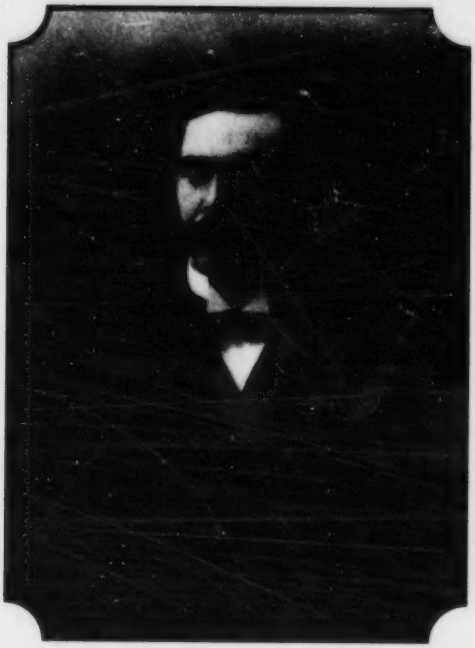
The third lesson for Scott in his apprenticeship was the art of compromise. He wanted to abolish or cancel the CPR's land tax exemption, but when he learned that there were serious political and legal obstacles, he accepted the federal offer of financial compensation. Similarly, he believed the province should be given control of Crown lands but accepted increased federal financial payments in lieu of provincial control. And on the school question, he accepted the compromise clauses drafted by Clifford Sifton. In each case, Scott's preferred policy was abandoned or modified. He strongly defended what he thought were the best interests of the province, but was willing to make concessions in return for improved financial compensation to be paid by the federal government. This made it possible for Scott

to remain in the Liberal Party and retain the friendship and confidence of Laurier and other federal Liberals while, at the same time, obtaining the best possible financial terms for the province. The continuing confidence and support of federal Liberals helped him establish a solid power base in the province.

CHAPTER 4

"MR. PREMIER"

[SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 1905]



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This province has as yet less than half a million souls and there is plenty of room for at least ten millions. Just as sure as the sun shines there will be within this Province alone some day a population running into the tens of millions.

— Walter Scott, 1910

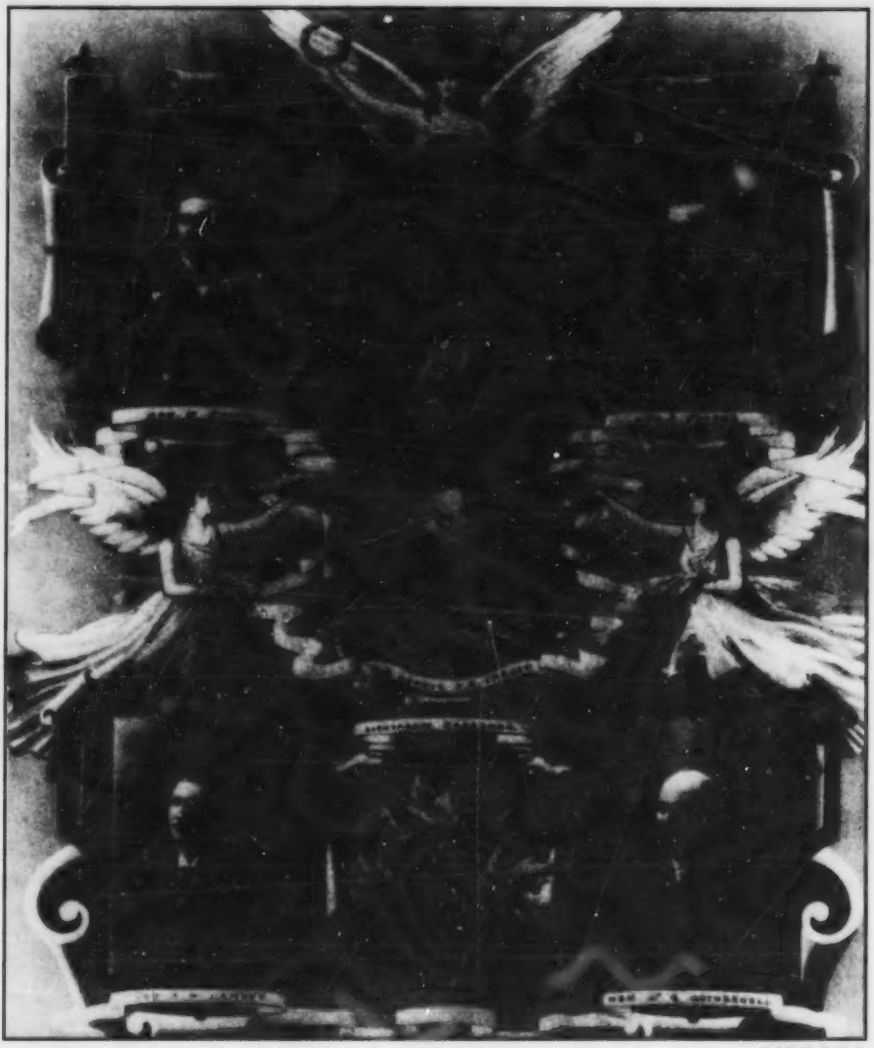
In the four months after Scott became premier, he had much to do to organize the province for a general election. The Autonomy Acts divided a portion of the old North-West Territories into two new provinces and the division of the two provinces was smooth. The governmental infrastructure stayed in Regina but two deputy commissioners and one commissioner moved to Alberta to establish that province's new government.[1] Scott's first task was to continue the established territorial government and mould it for the new province of Saskatchewan.

The Legislative Assembly, the cabinet, and the public service met and worked in two territorial buildings on Dewdney Avenue near the North West Mounted Police barracks, adequate buildings for the time. All territorial sessional papers and official documents remained in Regina. The government in Alberta, by contrast, faced the task of starting from the beginning.

The first task for the new premier in September 1905 was to pick a strong and representative Cabinet that would carry the party through the first election. Jim Calder was one of the first candidates on Scott's list. Even though Calder had been the deputy commissioner of Education in Haultain's administration, he and Scott had known each other since the federal election of 1900. In 1905, Calder resigned his post in the Education Department in order to practice law in Regina. Shortly thereafter, Scott invited Calder to his office with the offer of a Cabinet post. After several meetings and some persuasion, Calder finally agreed. He later reminisced that it was "a decision that profoundly affected all my future activities." Calder would go on to be one of Scott's strongest and most loyal Cabinet ministers, serving as acting premier during Scott's many absences. Calder was, during his political career in Saskatchewan, minister of Education, Highways, Railways, Telephones, and Provincial Treasurer.

The other cornerstone of the Scott Cabinet was W.R. Motherwell, one of the founders of the Territorial Grain Growers Association. Motherwell was a farmer near Abernethy and an influential leader in the farm community. This is an example of Scott's ability to attract farm leaders to serve in his government, which allowed the farmers to be central to government policy in the province and also kept the Liberal Party in power in Saskatchewan. Motherwell became the Minister of Agriculture and was the first of many farm leaders to be invited into Cabinet.

John Lamont, as Attorney General, was the fourth member of the Scott Cabinet. Lamont originally joined Scott as a fellow member of the House of Commons for the constituency of Saskatchewan, North-West Territories in November 1904. As a graduate from Osgoode Hall, Lamont practised law in



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The first Saskatchewan government. Clockwise from left: Walter Scott, James Calder, W.R. Motherwell, and John Lamont. In the centre is Lieutentant-Governor Amédée Forget.

Prince Albert before entering politics. Obviously the professional and personal relationship between Lamont and Scott was positive because they left federal politics together in September 1905 to form the first Saskatchewan Cabinet. With the four ministers in place, the Scott government was ready to set policy that would attract popular support for the forthcoming election, and hopefully beyond.

Scott took the territorial governmental structure and ran it in a prudent and scandal-free manner. He had a short period of time to prove to the citizens of Saskatchewan that he was an effective administrator.

THE LEADER.

HAIL PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN!

New Province Enters Confederation Under Happy Auspices—Brilliant and Spectacular Scenes—Imposing Military Review—Lieutenant Governor Sworn In—Civic Addresses Presented to the Governor-General and Lieutenant Governor—Luncheons and State Dinner—Grand Display of Fireworks—Dazzling Illuminations—State Ball

Officially Created September 1, 1905

Formally Inaugurated at Regina September 4, 1905

SAB R-B8339

Scott's newspaper, the Regina Leader, *heralds the birth of Saskatchewan.*

If Scott ran a scandal-free government as a way of proving to Saskatchewan citizens that he deserved to be elected, what role did patronage play in his administration? Columnist Jeffrey Simpson, in *Spoils of Power*, called patronage the "pornography of politics," arguing though that even if patronage has become less accepted by the people at the beginning of the twenty-first century, at the beginning of the last century patronage was the glue that held new political parties together.[2] Doug Bocking asserted that patronage was the key factor in the Liberal election victory in 1905.[3] Historian Lewis H. Thomas agreed with Bocking that Scott held power due to federal as well as provincial patronage.[4] Political scientist David Smith called the Scott-Calder administration a "well oiled machine."[5]

If this is true, when did Scott establish this machine? Did he use his powers as premier during the four months between his appointment and the first election to reshape government, and to put in place a Liberal public service? Bocking, Thomas and Smith argued that the Scott government was elected on December 13, 1905 because it had control of both federal and provincial Liberal administrations and, with this, of patronage appointments. The four months before the election represented an opportunity to rid the public service of "Haultain men" and to replace them with Liberal supporters. Patronage, used wisely, strengthened the Liberals for their first encounter with the Saskatchewan electorate.

Documentary evidence shows, however, that Walter Scott and his government did not use this four-month period of time to reshape government. For example, compared to Haultain's Cabinet of three commissioners, Scott's had four. It appears that toward the end of the territorial administration, Haultain carried an extra heavy load, anticipating the reorganization of the Cabinet at the formation of the province. Prior to August 31, 1905, he was premier and president of the Executive Council, commissioner of Finance, Education and the attorney general. His two Cabinet colleagues were G.H.V. Bulyea and William Elliott. On September 1, 1905, Bulyea was

named Alberta lieutenant-governor while Elliott was elected in December 1905 as a Provincial Rights Member of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. Scott chose none of the Haultain Cabinet members for his own government.

When the Scott Cabinet was sworn in on September 12, 1905, Scott became premier, president of the Executive Council and commissioner of Public Works. He spread the remaining workload amongst three other commissioners. Even though there was one more commissioner in the Scott Cabinet than in Haultain's, the portfolios stayed the same. Clearly Scott found the territorial pattern to be acceptable and made no move to change it.

Scott's Cabinet, throughout his term as premier, remained approximately the same size and shape, although there were several Cabinet shuffles to accommodate transfers. For example, W.F.A. Turgeon replaced John Lamont as Attorney General in September 1907, when Lamont was appointed to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal. Turgeon, a former law partner with Lamont, was elected to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly in a by-election in Prince Albert on October 12, 1907 and was re-elected in the constituency of Duck Lake in 1908. Lamont and Turgeon were active in partisan political activity, but in subsequent appointments to the bench were expected to be nonpartisan. During his premiership, Scott added only three portfolios to Cabinet: Railways (September 1906); Municipal Affairs (December 1909); and Telephones (January 1913). Scott viewed the form of the territorial Cabinet as a stable model to follow.

Premier Scott's apparent reluctance to bring major change applied to the senior public service as well. Of the six deputy commissioners under the Haultain administration, four continued under Scott. Scott replaced two deputy commissioners because the former deputies moved to Edmonton to work for the new Alberta government. Scott wrote to Spencer Page of Wapella: "We have made no change in the Departmental heads and deputies excepting the two cases where the former deputies went to Edmonton." Even deputies in sensitive posts such as finance or the Clerk of the Executive Council remained unchanged. John Reid, the holder of both of these posts under Haultain, had the full confidence of Premier Scott. The deputies remained in their posts for many years after the first election, and it would appear that they eventually left their posts due to retirement. There is no evidence that the Scott administration exercised a clearing of the senior decks upon taking power.

The notices of appointment in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*, published approximately every two weeks, show that there was no massive turnover in the lower levels of the public service. Until the establishment of a public service commission in 1913, all appointments were made by the Cabinet based on nominations from local MLAs. Patronage, at the local levels of the public service, was important to improve the chances for the government and the local members of the Legislature to be re-elected. Yet for the period from September 15 to December 15, 1905, there were, on average, only thirty-two appointments biweekly to positions such as justice of the peace, issuer of marriage licenses, highway inspector, agricultural inspector or issuer of liquor licenses. However, two weeks after the election, on December 30, 1905, there were notices for 184 appointments. It does not appear that these

appointments during the four-month interregnum were motivated by a desire to replace Conservatives with Liberals, but rather most of the appointments were renewals from the territorial days. There were a few vacancies due to resignation or retirement which had to be refilled. During this period, there was on average, one notice biweekly of a retirement or resignation from the public service. There was no sign of massive resignations or retirements, nor was there evidence that the Scott government used this time to get rid of the Conservatives in the public service and replace them with Liberals. Scott made a point of wanting competent individuals appointed and for those public servants to adopt a nonpartisan stance when discharging their duties.

What then was Premier Scott's plan with regard to the public service and to patronage in general? Scott was cognizant of the role of patronage. Before becoming premier, he wrote to a constituent: "it is not in order in places where we have friends in business to throw patronage into the hands of our Political apponents [*sic*]." Notwithstanding his support of the use of patronage, Scott knew that he had to exercise caution as he approached the election, recognizing that some replacements would have to be appointed to fill vacancies caused by transfers to Alberta. He welcomed some partisan help from Alberta such as a Mr. Smith, a coal mine inspector who was "an enthusiastic worker in our interests." On the other hand, Scott, before the 1905 election, did not take a partisan stand on appointments. On August 12, 1905, Scott wrote to Clifford Sifton urging the federal government to wait on appointments to the bench until after the provincial election. Scott was content to continue with the status quo:

> Regarding the Territorial appointments I may say that these all remain good until action shall have been taken by the new Provincial Government. Until the Government is formed, it is impossible to state exactly what action they will deem it proper to take, but my own view is that the simplest method to follow will be to merely reappoint all the commissioners for taking affidavits for the present at all events.

Concerning the renewal of a contract, Scott wrote to Robert Bickerdike, MP: "Until we know definitely whether we are to remain in charge of affairs in Saskatchewan we have decided not to disturb an arrangement which has existed prior to 1st September with one of the other companies."

Appointments were not the only possible areas for patronage. Did the Scott government use its new-found power to build bridges and roads in the province to influence the voter? Even after the first election, Scott wrote that money for bridges should not just be divided up by constituency. He favoured devoting money "for new works in the light of the necessity of the works and the advantages to be brought to the public without particular regard to the location of the works." As for this allocation of public works funds, Scott relied on the local MLAs (and Liberal MLAs in particular) for "guidance and advice," but was determined "to have our work done on reports made by our own inspectors and engineers and according to a settled line of policy."

From the time of Scott's appointment as premier until January 1906, administrative affairs were left in abeyance because an election had to be fought. As late as January 6, 1906, Scott wrote that members of the government had not met in

Regina and had not been able to "take up the question of the changes or additions in our staff which may be necessary or advisable."

After being premier for over six months, Scott admitted to having been too busy with other things, and thus had not turned his mind to the details of his public works portfolio. Not only had Scott been busy, but he was treating his new responsibilities with great caution:

> I hardly think it will be wise for the Government to enter upon any radical change of policy in this matter at our first session before we have had time to give it thorough consideration. It will probably be better for us to take a year to form our conclusions as to the directions in which changes ought to be made.

What had kept Scott so busy that he did not have time initially for administration? He wrote that he had been campaigning nearly continuously for three years. With elections, both federal and provincial, by-elections, delayed elections, and the autonomy battle, Scott did not have time, according to his correspondence, to turn his mind to the administrative detail of running a government. It was not until June 1906 that he started to feel as if he had time to solve the "practical problems which require to be dealt with in this Province."

Another potential way for Scott and his government to influence the result of an election was to control the preparation of the voters' lists. However, for the 1905 election, this was not possible. For this first election under territorial legislation, there was no provision for voters' lists at all. Each party ensured that its supporters turned out at the polls and registered votes on a blank ballot. Naturally, both parties accused the other of bringing ineligible voters to the polling stations. The voters who had been challenged cast a "reserve ballot" which was investigated and possibly counted later if the result was close. Being in government did not prove to be an advantage in determining who could vote. Even after the election, Scott was in no hurry to reorganize government within the province. In discussing the merits of changing the electoral law, Scott asserted: "At the present time I think there is a general feeling that it will be better for the Province if we can go on for two or three years with the absence of further political turmoil." It was not until the spring of 1908 that the Legislative Assembly passed an Election Act which provided for the appointment of a registrar and deputy registrars who were responsible for the registration of eligible voters. Lists of electors were published and the names could be challenged by the political parties. A court of revision heard challenges to names on the voters' lists. However, the Conservatives complained that Scott called a snap election for August 1908 without leaving enough time under the Election Act to challenge names on the voters' list.

The appointment of justices of the peace was an obvious patronage opportunity, but Scott expressed caution about interfering with the perception of neutrality in the court system:

> In my opinion nothing is more important than that the public should have confidence that justice shall be meted out with strict impartiality. I have no objection at all against appointing a political opponent as a Justice of the Peace if I am satisfied that he will leave politics aside when sitting on the bench.

The same applied to the appointment of a Liberal:

> The practice which I think the Government ought to follow in the appointment of Justices of the Peace is to recognize nothing but a man's fitness for the position regardless of his political leanings.

In considering the reorganization of the courts in Saskatchewan, Scott wrote that the government intended to take at least another year to study the entire question: "This will mean some inconvenience in certain localities, but it seems to me wiser that we shall make sure of our ground so that when we do act the steps will not need to be retraced."

Rather than rushing to establish a patronage machine during his first four months in office, and before the first provincial election, Walter Scott and his Cabinet decided to run a low-key campaign and to continue the system of governmental administration that had been in place under Haultain. No new controversy would be created and they could rely on an experienced public service while the politicians conducted the campaign. From the records, it does not appear that Scott used his first four months in office to build new roads or bridges in an attempt to attract votes. He preferred to rely on the departmental experts to advise the government where these public works should be built. Later, the Scott government did use its powers of patronage and did bring about a reorganization of government. But Scott was determined that, during his first few years in office, he would proceed slowly and cautiously. The detailed organization of campaigns or government was Calder's responsibility. Scott preferred to fight Haultain on the hustings on the broad policy issues. The reputed "well oiled machine" was not built in the first few years of Scott's premiership. This process took many years. With the new province, there were many appointments to be made. Scott insisted that the most capable people should be chosen.

However, the Scott government did not initially ignore patronage completely. Sometimes patronage was subtle and sometimes it was not. In June 1905, when a painting contract was tendered, Scott, while still a federal MP, wrote to Fred M. Crapper of Regina giving him dollar figures for his bid with the advice that if he used these figures, "it is probable you may land the contract." Scott cautioned Crapper, however, that this information was confidential and that he should copy the figures into a notebook and destroy the letter. Obviously, Scott did not destroy his own copy of the letter.

Patronage did have certain rules, the main practice being to hire locally. If someone came from the East, he would have to work in nongovernmental jobs so as to appear to be local before applying for government jobs. Scott expected public servants to stay out of active politics, even if being Liberal was a consideration for the position. Several years later he wrote: "It is not in harmony with the proper public policy that members of the civil service should be in positions when they may be advertised as political partizans [*sic*]." Scott expected, though, that they would carry out their duties with diligence and loyalty to the principles of Liberalism. Patronage went beyond the provincial government. He frequently wrote NWMP Commissioner Perry, urging him to give jobs and promotions to certain individuals. Scott even issued a summons to Commissioner Perry to meet in

Scott's office at a particular time and date to discuss certain "personnel issues." Even though Perry and Scott became friends, it was clear that Scott felt it was his mandate to make certain personnel suggestions to the commissioner.

As premier, Scott believed it was his right to exercise the powers of patronage. If he could not, then it was time to resign. He would not be pressured, though, by constituents seeking favours. If people asked for a job with the veiled threat that they would vote for the Conservatives unless they got it, Scott said this was the "poorest recommendation" they could give themselves — it was an offence to offer political support in exchange for a patronage plum. If an applicant had an "unsuccessful war" with alcohol, even if he was a supporter, Scott would not appoint him. The "enemy" had to be defeated before the appointment. To Scott, it was not patronage for patronage's sake. He made it clear that "to make appointments for purely political ends where there is no public necessity" was not justified. With patronage, it was not just political allegiance or service that produced the appointment. The candidate for the position also had to be qualified.

Throughout the thousands of letters Scott wrote to the people seeking appointments or a railway line or a courthouse, he was able to maintain his sense of humour. He often saw the negative side of patronage when someone turned against the party because the government had not granted his request. This happened frequently when two towns were competing against each other for a courthouse. The fierce battles led Scott to write: "One is almost made to think the better plan would have been to place the Judge at Oxbow where we don't appear to have enough friends to fall out with each other."

Even though Scott had the image of being a congenial and witty man, from time to time he showed his quick temper and vitriolic tongue. To an opponent, Scott wrote: "You are beneath being even despised. That a thing like you is allowed to breathe the same air as clean people is disgusting." It is unlikely that this individual received any favours from Scott.

For federal appointments, the members of Parliament made recommendations to the prime minister, while provincial appointments were made through recommendations from the local MLA. Another consideration for Scott in making appointments was whether there was sufficient money in the budget, money which always seemed to be in short supply: "the coat must be cut according to the cloth."

During the first four months that Scott was Liberal leader and then premier, he prepared his party and constituents for the upcoming election. On August 21, 1905, Scott sent a "manifesto" to his former constituents in the federal riding of Assiniboia West giving his reasons for leaving federal politics and outlining the Liberal platform for the pending provincial election. One month later, Scott sent another manifesto to the citizens in the new provincial riding of Lumsden, the constituency that he intended to contest in the first provincial election. Then, in October, Premier Scott embarked on a whirlwind tour of the province, speaking at Lumsden, Saskatoon, Carnduff, Wolseley, Sintaluta, Regina, Wapella, and Oxbow, to name a few. Scott kept a similar pace for November and December, culminating

in a joint rally with Haultain in Regina on December 11, two days before polling day. Scott travelled by train and buggy to visit all of these centres. It is obvious why he had no time for administration: he was in the campaign of his life and he was determined to devote all of his time and energy to the election.

Scott waged a low-key campaign and offered a low profile for the Provincial Rights Party. He urged his party workers to make "no noise" and to work quietly amongst the German settlers. The campaigners were not to have too many meetings: "Incessant quiet work will be the best." Flashy and high-profile patronage appointments would raise the Liberal profile in a manner Scott did not want.

Scott formulated the broad policies and the issuance of the party manifesto while Calder tended to the finer details of the campaign, such as the organization of the nominating conventions. Surprisingly, Scott did not even attend his own nominating convention in Lumsden. He sent his regrets and advised his party workers in Lumsden that Calder would attend in his place: "I am more than sorry to be prevented from attending the Convention but trust that Mr. Calder filled the bill. He can deal with the school question better than I can."

Rather than having his Cabinet ministers run in safe ridings, Scott insisted that they pick difficult ridings: "Lamont, Motherwell and Calder have everyone of them won districts which in each case nobody else could have held." And further: "It was a risky looking think [*sic*] to put the three ministers in such risky places, but it is the bold play that usually wins in politics." This was the first of many bold plays that kept Scott at least one step ahead of his political opponents.

The *Regina Standard* charged that federal forces had invaded the Saskatchewan election. Because Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, was in the province during the campaign to offer a hand, the editorials claimed that Scott was the "obedient servant" of Laurier.

What then was the Liberal campaign platform in the 1905 election? Walter Scott promised fair treatment to every citizen, including the new immigrants. The Germans/Austro-Hungarians, and in fact all immigrants, made up a large proportion of the province's population and they leaned toward supporting the Liberal Party. Scott intended to keep them within the fold.

The Liberal platform, as adopted by the August 16 convention, promised to "promote the welfare of the common people and to safeguard their interests." The party pledged provincial rights, common schools supported by provincial taxes and supervised by a provincial Department of Education. The Liberals promised, if elected to government, to build roads and bridges, to promote agriculture, and to lobby the federal government for construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern branch lines as well as a line to Hudson Bay. The Liberal government would push the federal government for the removal of the CPR land tax exemption and public control of public utilities. While the Liberals were promising government control of public utilities, the Conservatives favoured government ownership of those utilities. In all, the government would be "progressive and economical."[6] Scott claimed that he was in league with "no railway monopoly, but free and determined to work for more roads and better service." Liberals owed allegiance to no one, just the common people of Saskatchewan.

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A humorous look at Scott's Cabinet, drawn after the December 13, 1905 election victory. The cartoon was drawn by John Lamont, Scott's attorney general (upper right).

Scott's campaign was forward-looking, and the slogan was "Peace, Progress and Prosperity." According to the Liberals, to vote Conservative would be to look to the past and to court challenges over the Saskatchewan Act. The Liberals predicted "agitation and strife" if the province elected the Conservatives. Scott pledged to the people of Saskatchewan that he would provide "clean government, honest government, and ... progressive government." Frederick Haultain, the leader of the Provincial Rights Party (the Conservative Party in everything but name), promised that if he gained power, he would continue to "fight for Provincial freedom." Even though the Liberals wanted to talk only about the future of the province in the election campaign, they were obliged to respond to the Provincial Rights Party's concerns over the past negotiations for provincehood. Scott defended the terms of the Saskatchewan Act as passed by the Parliament of Canada.

As would be the pattern prior to each provincial election, Scott became involved in a libel charge. On December 6, 1905, one week before the election, J.K. McInnis, an old business partner of Scott's, publicly accused Scott of offering him $12,000 for property worth $2,000 if he would support the Liberal cause.[7] Scott reacted by charging McInnis with libel. The charge and countercharge added fuel to the political debate in the last week of the campaign. Why Scott had this falling-out with his former business partner is not known but, as will be shown later, Scott frequently had public disagreements with old friends. This was his temperament and this behaviour increased as his health deteriorated.

On December 13, 1905, the Scott government was elected with a seven-seat majority — comfortable, but close enough to keep the Liberal team united and on guard. Of the twenty-five seats in the Assembly, the Liberals won sixteen. The Liberal support was evenly divided between the northern and southern parts of the province, winning eight seats in each. The Opposition's support was concentrated in the south, winning only one seat in the northern area. Even though the province was primarily rural with as yet no major cities to boast of, the Liberals did win six constituencies with larger towns, while the Provincial Rights Party won two urban ridings.

Some time after the election, the court's decision in the libel case went in Scott's favour, but he had been worried. Scott admitted that it might have been better if he had ignored McInnis's charge, however, he could not let it go. To his old friend and editor of the *Free Press*, J.W. Dafoe, Scott admitted that the cou t case was another example of his taking chances.

In 1905, Scott could look back on five eventful years, with three electoral victories — two federal and one provincial — under his belt. Proud of his adopted province, and confident of his ability to lead it into the future, Scott became one of Saskatchewan's biggest "boosters." He stated:

> Very few people are ever content in the East after once having lived West, no matter how much they disliked the prairies at first nor how much they longed to get back East. In my own case I longed for Ontario the whole nine years from the time I went out in 1885 until I got back home the first time in 1894. Since then I have never felt the faintest inclination to return to live in Ontario.

Scott seemed to be describing himself when he wrote: "a young man of fair intelligence and industrious habits can scarcely fail to reach an independent position before he has passed middle life." Not only did he love the West, Scott was filled with optimism about the future: "This province has as yet less than half a million souls and there is plenty of room for at least ten millions." In another letter he wrote: "Just as sure as the sun shines there will be within this Province alone some day a population running into the tens of millions." It was with this optimistic attitude that Scott and his government set off in January 1906 to create an infrastructure that would serve the people of the province for generations to come.

Chapter 5
The New Government

[1906-1912]

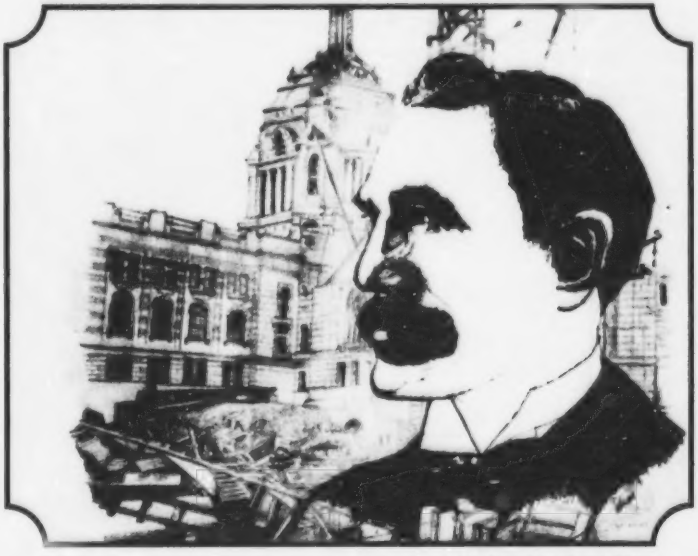


Illustration by Grant Welke

How many thousands of feet may climb these stairs in this entrance in the years to come — carrying a burden of responsibility as legislators, one long continuous line of them, year after year, generation after generation, century after century, — the trusted, invaluable administrative officials and experts and staffs, contemporaneous lines of them, generation succeeding generation,— studious or merely curious processions of spectators and visitors, week after week, year after year!

— Walter Scott, 1909

As 1906 dawned, a new day was starting for Saskatchewan. Even though there had been representative and responsible government in the North-West Territories (NWT) for the past fifteen years, it was a new beginning for the province and the Scott government. The new province was much smaller than the old territorial jurisdiction, and Saskatchewan's governmental and legislative structures in 1905 were modest indeed. There was a four-member Cabinet, with a Legislative Assembly of twenty-five members. On average, the first Legislature sat between six and nine weeks in the months of March, April and May. The sessions were short but intense. Members representing ridings outside of Regina came to the capital by train and expected to stay until the prorogation of the session. With the scarcity of passable roads in the winter, frequent travel between the capital and the constituency was not possible.

Because the sessions were short, members expected to sit most evenings in order to finish their work before spring seeding. Agriculture and the weather determined the timing of legislative business of the province. The members of the first Legislature faced a heavy legislative load. Many bills merely continued provisions of the territorial ordinances while others established new directions for the province.

Early legislation established departments, the public service, and clarified the role of the offices of lieutenant-governor and executive council. Other topics covered were the issuance of motor vehicle licenses, speed limits on highways, the establishment of officials such as coroners and issuers of marriage licenses. In the second session, legislation was passed to establish the University of Saskatchewan. At the end of each session, the members passed the budget for the coming year.

The MLAs met in the Territorial Legislative Building on Dewdney Avenue in a room planned for a smaller group of people. With the Cabinet, the Legislature and the public service being relatively small, there was an intimacy amongst the provincial leaders. Social functions at Government House, several blocks west of the Legislative Building, and at the NWMP depot immediately west of Government House, were popular meeting places for Scott, Haultain and their members. The political rivalries in the Legislature were keen, but the partisan barriers disappeared when members socialized together. It was a small community with an uncommon will to work together for the betterment of the province.

One of the first choices to be made by the new government was the location of the provincial capital. On May 23, 1906, W.C. Sutherland, MLA for Saskatoon, introduced a motion to locate the capital city in his constituency. Speaking in the

debate in the Legislative Assembly, Scott clearly favoured Regina, and the members defeated the motion 21-2.[1] The result of the vote showed that the northern members had voted in favour of Regina, leading historian Jean Murray to speculate that, of the sixteen members in the Liberal caucus, eleven were in favour of Saskatoon. Yet Walter Scott had been able to win over the northern members and convince them to vote against Saskatoon without causing a major split in the caucus. The Saskatoon "boosters" were disappointed but they were confident that they would win future battles.[2]

How then did Scott win over his members to support Regina? There is speculation that he promised the northern members that if they supported Regina this time, he would commit the government to granting other large institutions, such as the proposed university, to the northern centres as had been done in many American states.[3] Scott believed that if the people of Regina lost something already located in their city, their disappointment would be far greater than if they were not awarded something they had never had.[4] Scott knew that his government had to give some rewards to the south or the Liberal Party would be weak in that part of the province, while the Liberal strength was firm in the north.

Although it has been suggested that Scott favoured Regina because he owned land in and around the city, there is no evidence that he supported Regina in order to boost his financial investments. Rather, political considerations seem to have been the main reason Scott supported Regina's bid to remain the capital city of the new province.

Once the MLAs had chosen the capital city, the Scott government faced problems that were closer to the people and were more meaningful to the day-to-day lives of their constituents. Not all of these problems fell within the provincial jurisdiction as specified by section 92 of the British North America Act (BNA). Scott had a well-defined list of provincial powers and responsibilities — the construction of important railway lines, homestead and immigration policy, and the NWMP were all federal responsibilities. Because policy in these fields directly affected the quality of life in Saskatchewan, Scott was quick to refer these matter to the prime minister or appropriate federal ministers. However, the provincial government did not completely wash its hands of these federal fields of jurisdiction. As long as the federal and provincial governments were both Liberal, homestead inspectors (federal appointments) could exert influence on the new settlers to vote for the party which had brought them to the new land. As was shown, Scott was not reluctant to try to influence the commissioner of the NWMP (another federal official) in making appointments and promotions. Furthermore, although the Saskatchewan government did not issue bond guarantees to the railway companies to build branch lines until after the 1908 election, the provincial Liberals tried to convince the federal government to provide assistance to private railway companies to build rail lines in areas of the province that had voted Liberal or might be convinced to vote Liberal in a subsequent election.

Under section 92 of the BNA Act, the province was given the power to raise revenue through taxation, to borrow money, and to establish and maintain provincial institutions, the municipal level of government and the administration of justice.

In its first legislative mandate, the Scott government concerned itself with the establishment of the system of government. In the first session (March 29-May 26, 1906), the Legislative Assembly passed sixty-six bills pertaining primarily to government administration. The Speech from the Throne at the beginning of the second session (February 21-April 3, 1907) referred to the inadequacy of the railway system and urged the federal government to provide financial incentives to private companies to build additional miles of rail line for the more efficient shipment of wheat to market. The Legislative Assembly established a commission to study the establishment of local governments and passed legislation to create a judicial and educational system, including the University of Saskatchewan. Hail insurance, railway taxation and liquor licensing were topics of debate. In all, the Legislature passed forty-eight bills in a little more than five weeks.

At the opening of the third session (April 2-June 12, 1908), Lieutenant-Governor Forget noted the accelerated growth of the province and the large harvests of wheat. During the session, progress was recorded on the establishment of the University of Saskatchewan and the construction of the legislative building. The members considered issues such as the organization of municipalities, the provision of textbooks for schools and the compilation of voters' lists for provincial general elections. The Legislative Assembly passed sixty-one bills in approximately nine weeks.

With the heavy legislative load and the influx of new immigrants to the province, it was clear that the government had to increase the size of the Legislative Assembly in order to give appropriate representation to the people. As a result, a larger legislative chamber was needed. Similarly, a public service would have to be hired and housed to serve the expanding province in the generations to come. When Scott took on the role of minister of Public Works (Commissioner) in the first Cabinet, one of his first tasks was to begin the process of constructing a new legislative building. The Territorial administrative and legislative buildings, located on Dewdney Avenue, were too small. A new site would have to be chosen and a building built to match the grand future Scott envisioned for the province.

Under James Calder's scrutiny and with the approval of the premier, the government bought the old Sinton property from the McCallum-Hill Company for $96,250. This property, just south of Wascana Creek, was well away from the centre of town. Critics argued that the site was too far from town, but it did offer 162 acres of land which could accommodate a sizable building with land left for an impressive park.

As minister of Public Works, Scott began the search for an architect who would design this building and oversee its construction. Inclined to use his patronage power to choose a well-connected Liberal, on June 26, 1906, Scott wrote to Calder that he was tempted to hire F.M. Rattenbury, a friend and well-known architect. However, Scott resisted the temptation to arbitrarily hire Rattenbury, writing to him:

> My own preference was to have no competition but to select an architect. It was decided, however, that keeping the possibility of public criticism in mind it would be wise to have resort to a method of competition.

The temptation to use patronage remained strong, and in a second letter to Rattenbury, Scott wrote:

> While my personal view is pretty strongly in favor of putting the work directly in the hands of an architect if [*sic*] acknowledged standing, I found the competitive method, especially with regard to a public building, appealed to some of my colleagues with force. We have decided in favor of holding a competition."[5]

Obviously, there had been division in the Cabinet. Scott bowed to the consensus of his colleagues, and a competition was held. Cabinet decided to enlist the "best talent in architect which exists in the English-speaking world." The government did not want the importance of such a public building tarnished by charges of patronage or corruption.

Cabinet chose Professor Percy Nobbs of McGill University to lead an independent selection committee with the mandate of conducting a competition for architect. The three adjudicators chosen were Nobbs, Frank Miles of Philadelphia and Bertram Goodhue of New York, all three being recognized experts in the architectural field. Cabinet set the initial estimate for the cost of the construction at between $750,000 and $1 million.[6] The design was to take into account that Saskatchewan was part of the British Empire.

Scott's absence from the province due to pneumonia delayed the start of the architectural competition. Nobbs was ready to solicit designs but F.J. Robinson, deputy commissioner of Public Works, asked him to wait until Scott's return. The government had hoped to have the architect and design chosen in time for construction to begin by the spring of 1907, but since the competition itself did not commence until Scott's return in June of that year, the construction of the legislative building was postponed by a year.

Percy Nobbs recommended that seven architects from Britain, the United States and Canada be invited to submit designs for the new legislative building. This would be the beginning of many public projects for the Scott government, where key choices were made based on recommendations by "outside experts." Robinson was in charge of assessing the needs of the public service and the legislative assembly for "all time to come."

Early in the design phase, the government made several key decisions concerning the exterior of the building. Since the legislative building was to be located on the bald prairie, in Scott's opinion it needed a dome that would be visible for miles around. Second, the government commissioned a landscape architect, Frederick Todd, to design the layout of the land surrounding the building. Thus, the building would not only be visible, it would also harmonize with the planned park that would surround it.

Scott still felt political pressure, even though the government made the decision to go for an independent competition. This was the first chance on a local level for the Liberals to take advantage of the patronage levers of power. The Reverend D. Oliver, a Presbyterian minister in Moosomin and a strong Liberal supporter, wrote to Scott urging him to include another architectural firm in the competition. According to Oliver, the "best friends financially the Liberal party

have in Canada" made up this firm. As tempting as this recommendation must have been, Scott stuck to his government's decision for an open competition of seven architectural firms. In response to Oliver's letter, Scott wrote that he would not be increasing the number of architectural firms which would be invited to compete: "I am satisfied that these firms stand at the head of the profession in Canada."

The competing architectural firms viewed the competition as fair, the firm of Darling and Pearson writing that "we know of no competition that has been framed during recent years that has met with so much universal approbation among the profession." F.J. Robinson received all designs, replaced the names on the designs with codes and forwarded the copies to the three adjudicators. On December 7, 1907, the selection committee chose the design from the Montreal architectural firm of Edward and W.S. Maxwell. Clearly not wanting to be seen as having any part in the final decision, Scott stayed out of the province when Robinson received the choice of design and announced the decision to the public. Scott had decided to eliminate any political interference in the choice and wanted everyone to see that he was not involved. After the decision had been made, Scott wrote to Robinson, complimenting him on the fairness of the competition.

Notwithstanding that Scott had not been involved in the choice of the building's design, as minister he was clearly involved in the decision-making process for the construction phase. As early as January 10, 1908, Robinson delayed decisions for the hauling of gravel to the construction site because Scott was again away due to illness. By March, the architects finalized the design plans and issued the call for tenders for the general contractor. Again the government decided to hold an open competition to select a general contractor. There was political pressure to hire a local contractor but Scott knew that he had to choose a company that was large and financially stable enough to carry such a large construction project. The province could not afford to have the project collapse in the midst of construction due to bankruptcy proceedings by the contractor.

By June 1908, the government chose the firm of P. Lyall and Sons of Montreal as the general contractors. The Lyall bid was not the lowest tender, but the government believed that this firm was large enough to carry the financial load over the length of the construction period, which ultimately extended for four years. The opposition criticized the Scott government for choosing a Montreal firm — the same city as the architects' home base — charging that there had been price fixing between the Maxwells and P. Lyall and Sons. Both the Maxwells and P. Lyall denied this. Robinson's response to the opposition charge was that it was only an election ploy to stir up trouble. The opposition presented no proof and the debate soon died away. Nevertheless, Scott was adamant that, where possible, the general contractor should use local firms as subcontractors.

By the close of the competition and the awarding of the general construction contract, the projected price for the building had risen to $1,750,000 — $1 million more than the original estimate. The government instructed the architects to avoid waste and extravagance yet have the building "worthy" of the province. For every decision made on the project, the attitude of Robinson and Scott was that this structure was going to be built only once, so it had to be done correctly the first

time. An example of this philosophy occurred when Scott noted in the original design drawings that the exterior of the legislative building was to be red brick. Scott wrote to Robinson seeking a price on Tyndal stone. Even though the extra cost was $50,000, they decided to proceed. This meant a delay in the construction because the stone quarry in Manitoba had to be opened and a rail line built. In all, Cabinet — or in most cases Scott and Robinson — approved ninety-one changes to the specifications of the building. The overall quality of the finished product improved but costs also went up.

Scott was a "hands-on" manager, and involved in the selection of most items in the building, including even the plumbing fixtures, and Robinson deferred to him when it came time to make the major decisions. Scott insisted that the supplies for the building were to be Canadian or British made where possible, with American products being used only as a last resort. The construction phase was not all smooth sailing, however. In August 1909, a brick layers' strike erupted over the question of who could lay bricks used in the interior walls — qualified brick layers or general workmen? And, every fall, there was a shortage of labourers due to harvest.

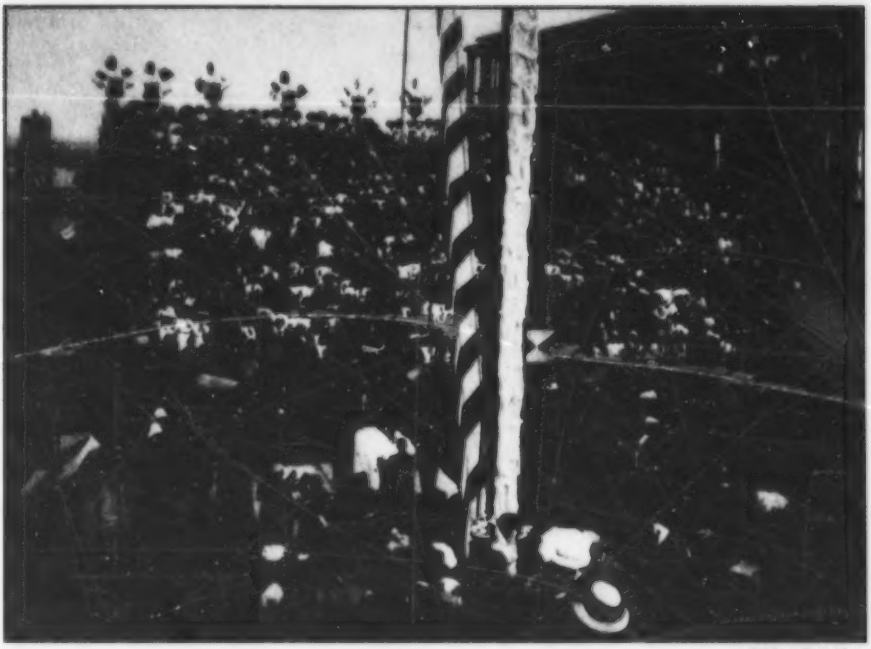
On October 4, 1909, the governor general, Earl Grey, laid the cornerstone for the legislative building. In addressing the assembled crowd, Premier Scott said that the building represented the character and ambitions of the people:

> laws originating in and emanating from the tens of thousands of happy fire-sides within the borders of the Province, will be framed, revised and perfected and put into statute form in the committee rooms and legislative chamber of this building. ...
>
> How many thousands of feet may climb these stairs in this entrance in the years to come — carrying a burden of responsibility as legislators, one long continuous line of them, year after year, generation after generation, century after century, — the trusted, invaluable administrative officials and experts and staffs, contemporaneous lines of them, generation succeeding generation, — studious or merely curious processions of spectators and visitors, week after week, year after year!

Scott then wondered aloud if future generations would remember the visionaries, himself included, who had planned this building?

Scott's determination to avoid controversy was apparent throughout the construction phase, and there is no evidence of blatant patronage in the hiring of construction workers, who were required to supply letters of reference and proof of competence. Nor was there any hint of the graft that had plagued neighbouring provinces with the construction of their legislative buildings; the government of Manitoba, for example, had been forced to resign over a scandal regarding the construction of its legislative building.

After more than four years of construction, the new governor general, the Duke of Connaught, officially opened the legislative building on October 12, 1912. Thus, just seven years after the formation of the province, the government and the



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The 1909 cornerstone ceremony for the new legislative building.

SAB R-B170(2)

The new legislative building in 1913, shortly after its completion.

Legislative Assembly had a new building in which to perform their functions. It was a building of which the people could be proud. Unfortunately, Walter Scott himself — the driving force behind the design and construction of the building — missed the opening due to illness.

The total cost of the legislative building was $1.8 million, double the original estimated price. Even though it was a landmark that became a showpiece for the province, not everything worked as initially expected. Just after the official opening, the deputy minister of Municipal Affairs wrote to the acting deputy minister of Public Works: "We will make no comment on the wonderful clocks which ornament certain portions of the Department but which were evidently never intended to give any reliable information regarding time." When the government made the final payment to P. Lyall and Sons on March 12, 1914, the Saskatchewan legislative building was finally complete.

Even though the building was a centrepiece for representative and responsible government, there was some criticism about the overall cost of the building. In defence, Scott wrote:

> The policy adopted is to put up a Chamber and set up offices adequate for at least twenty-five years without additions and which may for a century yet be creditable enough to form the main building on the Capital grounds. Disraeli said that nothing more completely represents a nation than a public building.

Scott was keenly aware that in order for British parliamentary institutions to be able to function in the new province, an educated and well-informed population was essential. Even though Scott had only a grade eight education himself, he believed that the province needed a university — in his mind, parliament democracy and education were the twin pillars of society. He was well aware of the pioneer spirit of ensuring that the future generation would have access to proper education. The University of Saskatchewan Act provided for the positions of registrar and president. James Calder appointed his deputy minister, D.P. McColl as the first university registrar.[7] McColl's first task was to establish convocation composed of graduates of any university who had lived in Saskatchewan for more than three months. It was the duty of convocation to elect a chancellor and a senate. Chief Justice Edward L. Wetmore was chosen as the chancellor. By September 1907, elections were underway for members of the senate.

The urban centres which were vying to become the site for the university tried to have as many of their citizens as possible on convocation, the senate, and the board of governors in order to affect the choice of site for the university — a decision that was to be made by the board of governors. The board comprised nine persons: three appointed by the Cabinet, five chosen from the university senate, and the president of the university named as the ninth member. In the University Act, the board of governors was made responsible for the "management, administration and control of the property, revenues, business and affairs of the university." As historian Michael Hayden wrote, the university was to be "state supported but not

state controlled." The Scott government purposefully created an institution that was a "comprehensive state-financed, self governing university." Scott withstood the temptation to use political interference or patronage in the operation of the university.

The first major decision facing the board of governors was the choice of a site for the university. As in the selection of the provincial capital, aspiring centres sought the site of the university in the belief that this institution would bring more business, economic activity and prestige to their community. The premier's absence due to illness delayed this decision, but when he called the second general election for August 14, 1908, choosing the location of the university became one of the issues in the campaign.[8] A.P. McNab, a Saskatoon Liberal candidate, raised the stakes by promising that, if elected, he would work to get the university for Saskatoon. He further promised that if Saskatoon did not get the university, he would resign. Ever the careful diplomat, Scott stated that the decision on the site for the university would be made by the board of governors, but would be subject to ratification by the Cabinet. Scott promised that this would not be a political decision.

On August 20, 1908, the board of governors offered Walter Murray, a philosophy professor at Dalhousie University, the position of president of the as yet unbuilt university. Scott told Murray, when they met for the first time: "This is a great country. It needs big men with large ideas."[9] This was not only advice to Murray but represented Scott's philosophy of his own life. Murray, for his part, was insistent that partisan politics should not interfere with the operation of the university.

The site of the campus was the first test of this principle. Based on Scott's election promise that the government would spread the institutions throughout the province, and since Regina had been chosen as the capital, the Queen City could not very well ask for the university as well. There is some speculation that Scott had decided that if the northern members would vote for Regina to be capital, they would be rewarded with the university. Yet, Scott promised President Murray that the government would not interfere with the decision over the university's location. Also insisting that Scott not be involved with this decision, Murray wrote that the public strongly endorsed the "policy of placing the university outside of the pale of party politics." Murray warned Scott that if party politics became involved in university affairs, the university would fall "prey to the schemes of designing men." Therefore, interference in the operation of a university could lead to the defeat of a government. Murray concluded: "I would rather see a minister rob the charity boxes than see a university pollute the springs of education. To me education is a religion and the university as sacred as the Church." These were strong words from the new university president, but Scott saw the value in his advice. Publicly at least, Scott pledged that the government would not influence the decision.

The new board of governors held hearings around the province before meeting in Regina on April 7 to make its decision about the university site. Murray made known his preference for Regina, believing that the university would gain more influence with government if it was close to the seat of government. On the other hand, Scott favoured Saskatoon, so as to spread the public institutions around the province. The board first decided that there would be a College of Agriculture and

that it would be located on the main campus of the university. This marked the first time in Canada that an agricultural college would be associated directly with academic and professional colleges.

The second item on the board's agenda was to decide on a site for the campus. The vote was conducted by secret ballot, with the alleged result being six to three in favour of Saskatoon.[10] If President Murray voted against Saskatoon, as he had predicted, this meant that two of the southern members and all of the northern members had voted in favour of Saskatoon. Professor Jean Murray argued that Levi Thompson from Wolseley and John Dixon from Maple Creek — both well-known Liberals — voted in favour of Saskatoon, probably under pressure from the premier.

Walter Murray was very disappointed with the decision, writing to his wife that "The interests of the University were simply ignored." However, he soon accepted that he and his family would reside in Saskatoon and realized that this decision had some positive advantages. Being farther away from the capital would possibly reduce the chance of partisan political interference in university affairs. Murray had a dilemma. He knew that the university could not defy the will of the people as expressed by the freely elected government, but neither should it be subject to the day-to-day whims of that government. Murray realized that the university had to follow a narrow path between complete independence of government, and reliance on government funding.

The official ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the university was on July 29, 1910. The following day, the *Regina Morning Leader* reported on Scott's speech, which praised the pioneers of the prairies for always setting a priority on education for their children. At the same time, Scott reaffirmed his belief that agriculture was not only a noble profession and vocation but the centre of the world economy:

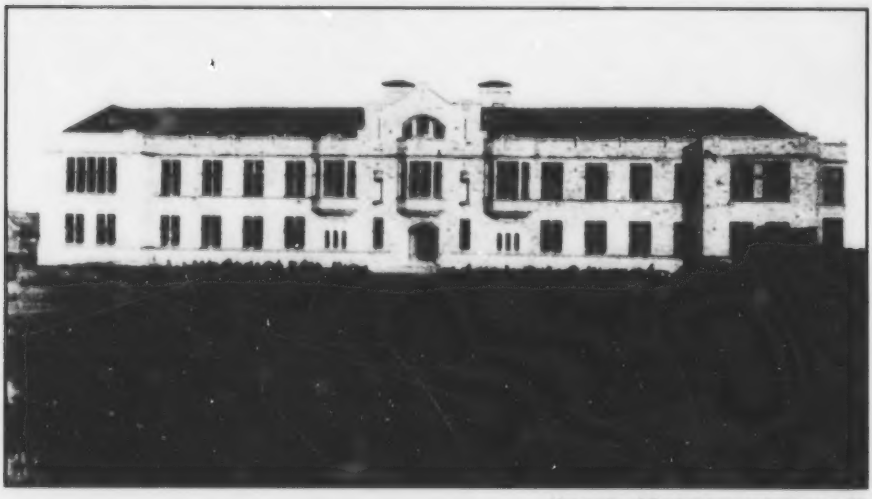
> Saskatchewan is essentially an agricultural province, which is no misfortune. Agriculture is the basis of the business of the world. Farming is the foundation of civilization. It is in keeping with the character of our province that the main part of the highest institution of learning in the province shall be an agricultural college.

Walter Murray was proud that the university would be the meeting ground of agriculture with other academic pursuits: "All are greatly benefitted by the intercourse and better prepared for service in the state, where the farmer, the doctor, the lawyer, the teacher and the engineer must work together for the public good." Scott had a high regard for universities but relied on President Murray to advise him on what the University of Saskatchewan required to become a top-level educational institution. Scott believed in a well-rounded liberal arts education and knew that the university would be more than a technical school. Murray and Scott both believed that the university should fulfill three other important functions: to train men to farm scientifically; to train women to be good mothers and homemakers; and, through theological colleges, to train ministers to look after the souls of the prairie families.

Scott worried from time to time that the school system was taking people away

University of Saskatchewan Archives A-8

Sir Wilfrid Laurier at the cornerstone ceremony for the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan, July 29, 1910.



University of Saskatchewan Archives A-32

The newly completed College of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan, c. 1913.

from the farm and creating individuals adapted to only the urban life. In this view he was supported by the Reverend George Exton Lloyd, who wrote to him outlining a plan to stop the flow of Saskatchewan youth from the farms to the urban centres. Lloyd saw the "spindley [*sic*] and weedy appearance of the younger girls and boys" on the streets of the towns and cities as a sign that the race of prairie people was being weakened by urban life. The province needed a shorter school year, particularly for high school, so that the youth could work on the farms for seven months — from April through October — and be in school from November to March. The school year would match the climatic conditions of the prairies and would build strong character in the youth. The province would gain from this new program as well because there would be a young, strong labour force available to work on the farms. With their farm labour, by the time the youth were finished school at age nineteen, they would have a taste for the agricultural way of life, being more inclined to stay on the farm and to open new land themselves. The people who wanted a more urban university education could go to other provinces to study. Lloyd insisted that "it is not the duty of an agricultural province to produce professional or arts graduates except as far as it fits the conditions of the Province." Scott did not adopt Lloyd's more radical proposals but was sympathetic to the overall goal of keeping Saskatchewan's young people on the farm. According to Scott, the university was to teach people the "dignity of agriculture."

Even though Murray and Scott had disagreed over the location of the university, they established a close working relationship and friendship. Murray remained nonpartisan, but was able to work well with the Liberal government, and Scott was anxious to have a good working relationship with the university, writing that "particularly during the early stages of the university it is important that the university authorities and the Government should take care not to act at cross-purposes." At the opening ceremonies for the University of Saskatchewan, Premier Scott, who was then also minister of Education, said that the university was there to solve "the everyday problem" and to meet the needs of the "everyday people." The university would be open to all people of the province, with no discrimination based on class, gender or culture.

The Scott government, in its early days, regarded the construction of a legislative building and a university as its most important achievements. Not only were structures built for a functional purpose but they also represented a philosophy and a way of life based on equality and opportunity. The new province had been built by ordinary people, and the institutions were there to serve them. The buildings, erected in less than a decade, reflected the attitudes of the people and helped shape attitudes and beliefs of the generations to come. For all of his initial concerns about political interference from the Scott government, Murray was able to write in 1937 of his admiration for Scott:

> I always felt when in your [Scott's] presence that I [was] with a great man, whose large and generous conceptions of your country and of your obligations to it lifted your listener to higher planes and nobler conceptions. What you did [in setting up institutions] was well done and posterity will always hold the first Premier in Saskatchewan in great honour.

By choosing Regina as the centre of government, and by locating the provincial

university in Saskatoon, the Scott government had demonstrated a sense of balance and fair play. However, there were other elements, and other urban centres, to be considered in the development of the provincial infrastructure. Mindful of its electoral commitment to distribute important institutions around the province, the Scott government now awarded the provincial penitentiary to Prince Albert, and the mental health hospital to North Battleford. Inexplicably, Moose Jaw, the third largest urban centre in the province, was awarded no major institution by the government.[11]

Scott's first legislative term was not preoccupied solely with developing the province's infrastructure, for other issues needed to be dealt with as well. An essential commodity for all Saskatchewan citizens was an abundant supply of coal for heating during the cold winters. Serious coal shortages in the exceptionally harsh winter of 1906-07 posed the first economic dilemma for the Scott government: should the government become directly involved with the coal mining sector of the province? Unusually cold weather and a strike in the Alberta coal fields led to a shortage of coal on the prairies. William Lyon Mackenzie King, federal deputy minister of Labour, tried to mediate a settlement. On February 20, 1907, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association (SGGA) passed a resolution calling on the Scott government to obtain a portion of the Saskatchewan coal fields from the federal government so that Saskatchewan would not be so dependent on the Alberta supply. Even though he worked hard to protect the people of Saskatchewan, Scott said that it was not the role of government to get involved with the mining of coal. Another factor in the coal shortage was the inability of the railways to transport sufficient coal from the mines to the Saskatchewan people. To avoid future coal shortages, W.R. Motherwell encouraged the CPR to devote more rolling stock in the summer of 1907 to the transportation of coal to Saskatchewan. The shortage of coal was one case where the Scott government felt pressure to solve a problem that was affecting the people of Saskatchewan, but was reluctant to have government involved directly.

Furthermore, Scott was not inclined to interfere in labour disputes. These, he felt, should to be resolved between the employer and the employees. In the first Legislature (1905-1908), the Scott government did not introduce any legislation directly pertaining to labour standards or working conditions. It was during the second session of the Second Legislature (1909) that the members passed the Factories Act, prohibiting the employment of children under the age of fourteen in any factory. Hours of work for women and youth were restricted to no more than eight hours per day or forty-five hours per week; there was no mention of any restriction on the number of working hours for men. The act also prescribed how young women were to wear their hair to avoid industrial accidents.

In the third session (1910-1911), the Legislature passed the Workmen's Compensation Act and established the Bureau of Labour. The Act prescribed the conditions for people working on railways, mines, and factories. The employer was required to pay compensation for injury sustained on the job. The new Bureau of Labour, located within the Department of Agriculture, was to "collect, assort, systematise and publish information and statistics" related to strikes, hours of work

and working conditions generally. With the establishment of the Bureau of Labour, the government began to monitor working conditions and labour standards.

During the 1912 session, the Legislature passed an An Act to Prevent the Employment of Female Labour in Certain Capacities. This Act prohibited any "white woman or girl" from working in a business such as a restaurant or laundry which was owned and operated by "any Japanese, Chinaman or other oriental person." Generally the labour legislation attempted to protect female workers, either in dangerous working environments or in business establishments that were a threat to the moral well being of "white women." As offensive as this must appear to a modern audience, it must be remembered that legislation against the Asian population (particularly male) was a reflection of commonly held views at the time. Asian workers were welcome to do the dangerous work in building a railway or the menial tasks in a restaurant or laundry, but they were not encouraged to mix with the population of European descent. Relationships between Asian men and Caucasian women were discouraged.

With major projects such as the construction of the legislative building underway, the provincial government was now an important employer, and Scott found that the government was becoming involved in labour disputes. In 1908, the labour movement was pushing for a fair wages officer and standards in wages. Scott approached the Trades and Labour Council to recommend candidates for the position of fair wages officer, ultimately appointing one from the list provided. In this way, the Trades and Labour Council could not complain about the person chosen for the post. This was consistent with Scott's policy of consulting with experts and those involved, and then acting on their recommendations.

Scott saw the hardship that unemployment brought to the people, yet he hoped that the government would not have to become too involved and that the provincial labour situation would correct itself without government assistance. Scott believed that it was the role of charities and municipalities to offer relief to the unemployed. What, then, were the solutions for curing unemployment? Scott ruled out deportation, soup kitchens, and providing work on borrowed money, proposing instead that the unemployed be settled on vacant farm land. This would attract more settlers, vacant land would be settled, and there would be an additional source of foodstuffs. The difficulty was that the provincial government did not own the public lands, which were within federal jurisdiction. These jurisdictional ambiguities, in Scott's opinion, relieved the province of responsibility:

> Candidly I cannot see how the Province can handle any practicable scheme. If we held the natural resources the problem would be ours to work out, but as things stand I do not think it is our problem, leaving aside the question of the financial ability of the Province.

Publicly, to maintain political credibility, Scott argued for provincial control of Crown lands. However, privately he pressured the federal government to do more to settle the unemployed on the land.

An internal paper from the Labour Bureau of the provincial Department of

Agriculture recommended that means be found to keep people on the land. The new settlers often homesteaded but, missing the luxuries of the urban centres, eventually moved off the farm. The Department of Agriculture concluded that if the people could be convinced to stay on the land, food production would go up and unemployment would go down. The value of agriculture to the economy and to the well-being of the residents of Saskatchewan became a predominant theme for the Scott government.

Scott was clearly at the height of his power and influence during the first seven years of his premiership. Even though he was plagued with asthma and pneumonia and forced to miss key events such as the opening of the legislative building, Scott was able to lead his government and party as he built the institutions of the province. Trusted and liked by the people, his popularity increased as the years went by because he had the "common touch." After the 1908 provincial election, Joseph Harrison, managing editor of the *Prince Albert Advocate* wrote to Scott: "I know you and I believe in you and know you are right." The 1908 *Canadian Annual Review* described him as a "shrewd and aggressive politician" who was in touch with the western ways and politics of the province. He was a "man of the people, personally popular, and in close touch with the powers at Ottawa." Scott was in an enviable position for a politician: he could relate to the common person on the street and yet had the inside track to Ottawa.

On a personal level, Scott was doing well financially. Just after he became premier, he sold the *Regina Leader*, believing that it would be unethical for the *Leader* to receive printing contracts from his government. Interestingly enough, this same philosophy did not seem to apply to the *Moose Jaw Times*, which he owned until he died. This was the first newspaper that he had owned individually and thus perhaps it meant more to him. For a newspaper which he had bought for $600 in 1894, by October 1906, Scott's interest in the *Moose Jaw Times* had increased to $1,200. He held 1,200 out of the 1,320 shares in the company. Scott was a businessman who believed in rugged free enterprise, where profits came to those who worked hard and invested well. In advising potential newcomers on how they could best settle in this new province, Scott recommended that they go into business as opposed to the public service.

Scott viewed his business career as part of building Saskatchewan, practising what he preached in developing the provincial economy. It was a new land with limitless opportunity for entrepreneurs to build the province and enhance their private holdings. There is no evidence, however, to show that Scott used his public office for personal gain. Rather, he applied his philosophy on business development to his personal business career and to building the province.

Where did Scott earn this money and what was his financial worth? As a young man and a newcomer to the West, Scott quickly learned the ways of the frontier entrepreneur. He established a partnership with J.M. Young, his brother-in-law, who was in real estate in Regina. Together they bought land in Regina that could be resold for development. In 1903, Scott wrote to Young that they should not sell

their property until they could realize a profit of 50 percent or more. Scott borrowed money to capitalize on the building boom in the West. When the Regina and Hudson Bay Railway was considering coming to Regina, Scott and Young contemplated borrowing additional money to buy more land on speculation for the new railway. However, Scott decided against this, writing to Young that he was "so loaded up with interests in land blocks" that he could not afford to borrow further.

Scott generally favoured Canadian ownership of the railways but when it came time to sell land to the railway companies, profit became his sole consideration. Scott wrote that notwithstanding his preference for Canadian-owned railways, he doubted that William Mackenzie of Canadian Northern would pay Scott's price for the land he owned: "From the personal point of view, if that price can be got from Hill [an American], he is the man to sell to."[12]

In addition to his brother-in-law, Scott formed financial alliances with other members of the Regina financial community. Scott signed an agreement with James Balfour, a local lawyer, to buy 250 shares (worth $2,500) in the Rundschau Company Limited. All profits and value were to go to Scott from this transaction. Scott's shares were under Balfour's name as a "temporary convenience." Scott also bought shares in the Great West Permanent Loan and Saving Company, the Regina Land and Investment Company Limited, the Saskatchewan Valley Land Company, the Rocky Mountain Development Company Limited, Sovereign Life Company, and various gold mines. By means of a secret deal, Scott and James Calder held the mortgage on property, ultimately bought by Famous Players, at the corner of Scarth Street and 12th Avenue, in the heart of Regina. Scott also held commercial property in Moose Jaw and bought a five-acre orchard at Naramata, near Peachland, British Columbia.

By 1910, according to his financial statement, Scott's investments were beginning to pay off. He realized a profit of $6,741 on real estate and $5,000 from the *Times* in that year alone. Ten years later, he was worth approximately $507,000 in shares, property, and cash. Because Scott was busy with politics and was travelling for business and personal reasons, J.F. Kerr of the *Leader* and later J.W. McLeod, his private secretary, held power of attorney over Scott's affairs. J.W. Miller of Moose Jaw was the editor and manager of the *Times* and, with McLeod, paid Scott's bills and handled his financial affairs even after he resigned as premier in 1916. Not only did Scott have financial assistance from his friends but he had various sources of professional advice in his businesses. W.F.A. Turgeon, the provincial attorney general, gave free legal advice; W.R. Motherwell, the minister of Agriculture, gave advice on how to farm the land Scott owned just outside of Regina; and George Bulyea, the lieutenant-governor of Alberta, provided advice on the operation of Scott's orchard in British Columbia.

There was an apparent conflict of interest for J.W. McLeod and Scott. McLeod, as Scott's private secretary, controlled the allocation of government printing contracts to the printing shops within the province, including the *Moose Jaw Times*. At the same time, McLeod and Miller handled Scott's financial affairs. Allocating printing contracts to the *Times* meant a larger profit margin paid to Scott. It is likely that the public and the opposition knew of these contracts but there is no evidence

that anyone ever complained. Perhaps the profit coming to Scott was not sufficiently large for the opposition to raise the issue.

In 1913, as the winds of war were beginning to blow in Europe, Scott wrote to J.W. Miller, advising him to be sure to pay Scott's bills and to ensure that he was in sound financial shape. Scott predicted that war could break out in the Balkans, and that if it did, money would be in great demand in Europe, making it nearly impossible to borrow money in western Canada. Scott's prediction came true. World War I did erupt in the Balkans in August 1914, and money indeed became scarce for investment in western Canada.

Although Scott led a busy life, and was troubled by his health, he retained his keen sense of business. He cleverly borrowed and invested in Saskatchewan during a time of expansion and growth. Even though he was lucky, and made his money during good times, Scott was financially astute in borrowing money and investing in a wide variety of businesses and agricultural, commercial, and residential properties. His financial astuteness proved to be more important to him in his accumulation of wealth than luck, although a little of that did no harm.

Scott had faith in the province of Saskatchewan and its ability to generate prosperity. As has been shown, Scott was able to create his own wealth through wise business investments. Policies that were good for the province were also beneficial for the businessmen and farmers. Saskatchewan was a land of great opportunity.

Scott, especially with his poor health, was not able to lead his home province by himself. His faithful supporter (and often acting premier when Scott was away due to illness) was James A. Calder. With experience in the school system, Calder had worked in the Department of Education as deputy commissioner under Frederick Haultain. He studied law and opened a private law office before accepting Scott's invitation to go into the first Cabinet in 1905. Scott relied on Calder for advice and support, and to attend to the small but important details of running a government and political party. Calder never had Scott's public appeal, and he concerned himself with the electoral boundaries, returning officers, and campaign details that are so necessary for a successful election. The two men complemented each other in their strengths and weaknesses. Scott admired Calder, writing, for example, to a friend in Ontario: "Keep your eye on Calder. In my opinion, excepting [Clifford] Sifton, there is not in Western Canada his equal." Yet there was little doubt in anyone's mind as to who was the head of the government. In 1918, Scott reminisced on his relationship with Calder: "With me Calder did the work and the management, but I had been the real head once on a time and always would have been looked on as a head." Scott wrote that although Calder appeared to be a cold calculating administrator, he actually had a warm heart. Scott gave much credit to Calder for the success of the government and to the building of Saskatchewan.

Some of the credit also had to be shared with W.R. Motherwell, one of the founders of the Territorial Grain Growers Association and a respected farmer in the Abernethy area. Neither Calder nor Motherwell had been directly involved in territorial politics when Scott picked them as the mainstays of his new government.

Scott was often very frustrated with Motherwell's lack of political organization, but he admired him as a friend and a contact with the agricultural community. Motherwell was one of the farmers, a segment of Saskatchewan society that the Scott government relied on to stay in power.

The third figure in the community that Scott consulted on a regular basis was the commissioner of the NWMP, A.B. Perry. Scott never missed an opportunity to speak to Perry on behalf of a supporter or constituent for a position within the force or a raise for one of the constables. Scott and Perry became friends as well as leaders in the prairie community. Scott recognized the limits of his power with the NWMP as he wrote to a resident of the province:

> You understand, of course, that the Provincial authority has no direct say in the management of the Force which is under Dominion control. All I can do is to try to use what personal influence I may possess with Mr. Perry.

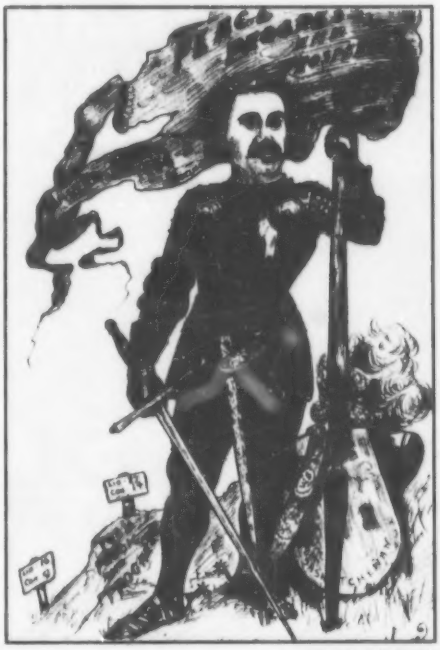
Saskatchewan was a small community with few leaders within the province, and Scott was friends with them all. Walter Murray at the university, Commissioner Perry with the NWMP, Calder and Motherwell in Cabinet, and even Frederick Haultain as leader of the opposition were Scott's friends and colleagues. These men worked and socialized together. Even though they had their differences about the proper direction of the province, they shared a goal of making the province the best within the Dominion. Their optimism that they could do this was unlimited.

When Scott called the election for August 14, 1908, less than three years since the last election, the opposition cried foul. The Provincial Rights Party claimed that Scott had called a snap election to catch the opposition off guard. Haultain charged that the provincial Liberals were merely pawns of the federal Liberals and had called the election to test the political winds for Laurier. Scott denied the charges, claiming that he sought a new mandate for railway branch line expansion and fuller representation for the people of the province with a larger Legislative Assembly. The Assembly was expanded from twenty-five to forty-one seats. Scott maintained that the province needed a new Legislature to review new rural municipal legislation.[15] During the election campaign, Scott promised railway expansion, including the often-promised line to Hudson Bay, increased telephone service, free readers for the schools, and the creation of rural municipalities. Scott's government ran on its record of having provided sound administration. Scott stressed to the people of the province that he had ties with the federal Liberal government which enabled him to "get things done." As the *Canadian Annual Review* described him, "Walter Scott was 'the man who does things,' his Government was a creative and constructive one, his friendly relations with the Federal powers would help in continued development."

The apparent ties between the federal and provincial Liberals became an election issue. Scott realized that it was detrimental to be too closely linked with the federal Liberal party, seeing a risk in devoting too much time and attention to the federal issues at the expense of local concerns. As a sign of Scott's concern for

being too closely tied to the federal Liberals, he asked Calder to resign from a federal election planning committee.

In the 1908 provincial election campaign, opposition leader Frederick Haultain complained that because of the early election call, the voters' lists were not ready. A new Election Act had created a mechanism for preparing voters' lists but the time period for appeals to the Court of Revision had not expired before the election call. Haultain argued that this was one more sign that Scott was in the pocket of the federal Liberals. Calling for direct government involvement in the Saskatchewan economy, Haultain supported government ownership of telephones and interior elevators. Manitoba had begun an experiment in government-owned grain elevators and telephones, while the Alberta government already owned and operated the telephone system. These two examples became models for Haultain and the Provincial Rights Party.



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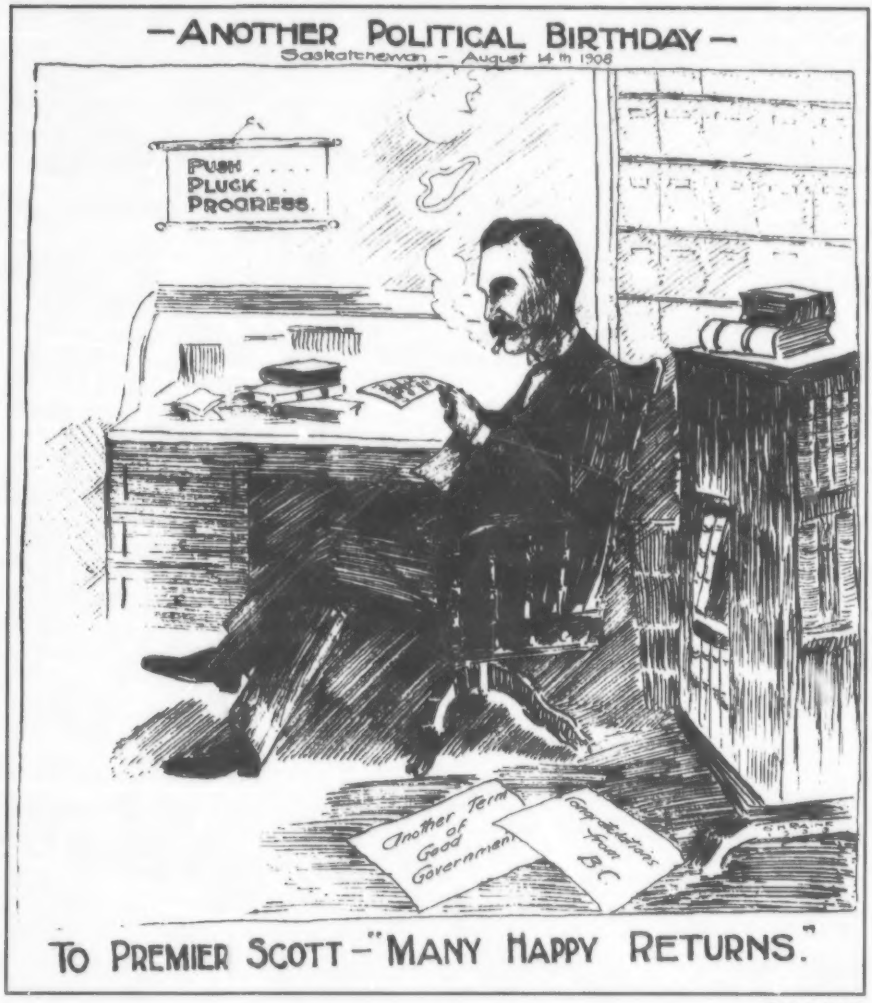
Walter Scott (as Ivanhoe?) after his 1908 election victory.

On the other hand, Scott's Liberals favoured limited government involvement in the economy and preferred a co-operative solution. Scott believed that less government involvement meant lower financial risk to the government and less political interference. Scott's belief in the role of government was based on practical and philosophical considerations. Even though he was personally a wealthy man, Scott was careful to avoid the commitment of government funds for the elevator or telephone systems as had been done in neighbouring provinces.

The Liberals were re-elected on August 14 with a two percent decrease in popular vote but a two percent increase in the number of seats. Scott wrote that this majority was large enough to be "sufficient to support a progressive policy while not so large as to be a menace to good government."

However, close ties with the federal political system did have advantages. When Calder and Motherwell were defeated in politically difficult constituencies in the 1908 provincial election, they shortly thereafter ran in by-elections which were held when two Saskatchewan MLAs resigned their provincial seats to run federally.

As had happened in 1905, there was an infamous libel suit just before the 1908 election, with charges and countercharges flying back and forth. In August 1908, Scott, in line with his penchant to create controversy during an election campaign, publicly charged that H.W. Laird, a Regina town councillor, had received a



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Another political cartoon, showing Scott reading telegrams congratulating him on his 1908 election victory.

"kickback" in a local waterworks project. Laird promptly sued Scott for libel, and then ran for the Provincial Rights Party in the 1908 election. The libel suit did not go to court until well after the election, when the jury was not unanimous but voted in favour of Scott. Even though Scott was cleared, each side had to pay its own legal costs, and a portion of Scott's legal costs was paid by the Liberal Party. Nonetheless, Scott had to pay some of the costs which as he jokingly wrote would save him from, "becoming a bloated capitalist too hastily."

This case is illustrative of the contentious political climate of Saskatchewan elections, where it was common for someone to launch a libel suit against an opposing

candidate. The press and the public would then talk about the issue, but there could be no court resolution to the charges until after the election. By that time, the results of the court cases seemed inconsequential. There was, though, an emotional drain on Scott: "These sessions and election campaigns and libel suits are entertaining but, like too much champagne, there may be after-effects." Notwithstanding the charges of libel and conflict of interest, Scott's government was renewed for another Legislature with a larger majority than before. The people of the province had supported Scott's building program and his goals for the future.

The theme for the second Legislature was that the foundations for the new province were in place and that it was time for the Legislative Assembly to establish a municipal level of government and to offer loan guarantees to railway companies for the construction of branch lines. In nearly every Speech from the Throne, the lieutenant-governor mentioned the abundant crops which placed Saskatchewan in the "unrivalled and unchallenged position as foremost grain producing province in Canada."

During the second term of the Scott government (1908-1912), the Legislative Assembly passed 207 bills. With the influx of new settlers and the abundant wheat crops, the government was active legislatively. However, in comparison with today, the sphere of influence for the provincial government was limited. As will be shown, the Scott government led the province with the philosophy that government should not assume ownership of ventures that could be handled by cooperatives or private enterprise.

Chapter 6

Agriculture: "The Foundation of Civilization"

[1908-1915]

Illustration by Grant Welke

In reality no law can absolutely prevent men being foolish. Take away men's responsibility, that is to say, protect them completely against the possibility of their own foolishness and very soon we would have a set of weaklings in the country. It is only by withstanding temptation that character is made strong.

— Walter Scott, 1913

For Saskatchewan, the first ten years of the twentieth century were at a time of remarkable growth and expansion, particularly in agriculture.[1] The population of the province increased fivefold and there was rapid expansion in the agricultural industry. Wheat was the primary crop for the prairie land. In 1900, Saskatchewan grew 7.8 percent of the total production of wheat grown in Canada, but by 1910 its share had risen to 50.7 percent. In the same period, Ontario's share of national wheat production dropped from 84.7 percent to 15 percent. The rapid increase in tilled acreage proved a boon for the provincial economy, with revenue from wheat production growing from $4.5 million to nearly $80 million per year. Agriculture, as the economic backbone of the province, vaulted Saskatchewan into wheat production leadership.[2]

However, although the agricultural industry was expanding quickly, the annual reports of the Department of Agriculture indicate that little new agricultural policy was initiated during the first term of the Scott government. The department concentrated on the maintenance of a broad and general service for the farmers of the province. In 1905, Deputy Commissioner J.R.C. Honeyman wrote that there was no report for the first eight months of the year because there were "no officials in office to report nor are there any to whom the report could be made." Subsequent reports gave detailed accounts of crop and animal production, weather conditions, vital statistics and public health. For the first few years, the department devoted its energies to establishing reporting procedures and acted as a "general information bureau."

By 1908, the Department of Agriculture began to reveal new initiatives such as scholarships for men and women studying agriculture and home economics. The big news of the year was the establishment of the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. The school year was from November to March to fit the growing season.

Some of the problems facing Saskatchewan farmers were the storage and transportation of the rapidly increasing volume of grain being produced. The grain elevator companies and the CPR appeared to the farmers as monopolies with an economic strangle hold on the agricultural industry. Scott expected the federal government to encourage the construction of more rail lines in the West to provide competition to the CPR. Since the railways were carriers of interprovincial and international trade and commerce, they were a federal responsibility. This did not prevent Scott from pressuring the federal government into action. Scott's experience as a member of the House of Commons and his friendship with Prime

Minister Laurier helped him represent Saskatchewan's interests to the federal government.

Farmers relied on the large grain elevator companies for the storage and sale of their grain. Scott avoided direct government involvement in this industry but used government influence to establish farmer-owned cooperative grain elevator companies.

The tariff, a federal duty on imports, particularly farm implements and supplies such as binder twine, was another problem area for the agricultural industry. Since tariffs on agricultural goods increased the farmers' cost of production, Scott promoted free trade, particularly with the United States. Even though foreign trade and the tariff policy were within federal jurisdiction, Scott used his influence to have the tariff reduced or eliminated. While Scott realized that, in the short term, tariffs were a necessary evil which generated much-needed revenue, he wanted them reduced and ultimately eliminated once the federal treasury could afford to forgo the revenue.

With transportation and trade under federal jurisdiction, the provincial government had little room to move except to represent western farmers in petitioning the federal government for change. In areas where the provincial government had jurisdiction, such as government ownership and control of the grain elevators, Scott was reluctant to have his government involved directly since his government had no one with practical experience in the grain-handling and grain-marketing business. It was too risky to entrust such an important undertaking to inexperienced administrators.

Even if he did not have much power or jurisdiction in agriculture, Scott was masterful at sensing public sentiment and the needs of the province. Although his own profession was not directly related to agriculture when he entered politics, Scott soon learned that to be a successful Saskatchewan politician, one had to have rural roots and close ties with the land. His first inclination in government policy was not to have government directly involved in economic ventures. Yet, as he faced pressures from the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association (SGGA) and demands that the government deal with the many problems that were confronting his constituents, he became more inclined to experiment with limited government involvement in the economy.

One of the key elements of Scott's successful leadership style was his ability to consult with experts in assessing needs and formulating new policies. In this respect, he made every effort to cultivate the SGGA. The importance of this organization cannot be understated, as the *Canadian Annual Review* noted in 1913: "No single organization in the West had so great an influence in directing legislation as the Grain Growers' Association of Saskatchewan." Historian Evelyn Eager noted the close connection between the SGGA and the provincial government, arguing that these close ties were not a coincidence but were "carefully guarded and cultivated" by the Scott government.[3] The SGGA was a pipeline of information and opinion from the farmers to the government. Scott was also able to reverse the flow from time to time, using the SGGA as a means of persuading the farmers to follow the government's lead. In any case, Wheat was king and, if the government hoped to stay in power, the interests of the farmers had to be paramount.

One means by which Scott stayed in touch with Saskatchewan farmers was to bring members of the farm leadership into his government,[4] and W.R. Motherwell and George Langley are two of the more important examples of Scott's success in this regard. As historian W.L. Morton noted, in Saskatchewan, unlike other jurisdictions, the agricultural reform movement was incorporated into the government.[5] The Scott Cabinet, it seems, had its fingers firmly on the pulse of the farmer.

Throughout his career as a politician, Scott would emphasize the importance of farming. For example, at the cornerstone ceremony for the first building at the University of Saskatchewan, Scott said that farming was the "foundation of civilization." He was adamant that "without farmers this country would be useless." And further: "agriculture forms the real basis of all business and commerce." Scott kept in mind the importance of agriculture to the provincial economy when formulating policy:

> The Saskatchewan government strives always to remember that agriculture is the foundation industry and as such calls for first attention and the chief attention at the hands of all charged with the conduct of public affairs.

This statement highlighted the overall theme of the Liberal government under Premier Scott.

Agriculture was important to more than just the politicians. The Reverend George E. Lloyd, and Anglican minister, wrote to Scott that "Saskatchewan is primarily and chiefly an agricultural province and probably will always remain so. The development therefore of the whole province should be in the interests of the 'country life' rather than the towns and cities." Scott shared this sentiment: "many of us have been forgetting that the urban centres have to subsist wholly upon the agricultural population." Lloyd and Scott shared the view that agriculture was the best way of life. To live on a farm and produce food meant that one was close to nature. It was a wholesome and healthy lifestyle.

How, then, could people be encouraged to stay on the land? What could be done to make the rural way of life look more attractive than the city lights? In a speech to members of the Legislative Assembly, Scott said that people would be less inclined to move away from the farms if they had proper services such as roads and telephones. Transportation and communication would shorten the miles between farm families and make life more convenient for everyone. It was the role of government to provide these amenities in order to support not only an agricultural economy, but an entire way of life.

With the invention of the telephone, the distances between farm families could be reduced. In an effort to keep people on the farm and to limit the feeling of isolation, the Scott government sought to meet the challenge of providing the telephone to every farm family. Scott was committed to the principle of public ownership of telephones for long-distance lines and links to other provinces. On the other hand, he felt that it would be "suicidal" for the government to try to provide a telephone to every rural resident: "We have, however, been trying to work out a

plan of encouragement to be of practical effect while still leaving enough responsibility on the country people themselves to keep the Government free from the danger of being swamped."

By mid-summer of 1909, the provincial government took over the existing telephone system from Bell Telephones and encouraged the rural areas to form their own telephone companies composed of local shareholders. They charged rental for the services and looked after their own line construction and repair. The provincial government provided the telephone poles and a coordinating service to the rural telephone companies. Farm families had to show an interest by signing up, and they had to be prepared to invest a small amount of money in the telephone service. By forming a company, the rural residents took on the responsibility of owning and operating their own service. This spirit of cooperation made it possible for the people of Saskatchewan to establish a province-wide telephone service without having the government assume all of the responsibility.

Transportation was another key element in the Scott government's efforts to keep people on the land. Farm families needed roads in order to transport their grain to the nearest distribution points, and the province needed highways to connect the urban centres. Thus, road construction became a cornerstone in the patronage system of the Scott government. In the first two years of Scott's tenure, roads tended to follow the trails used in pre-settlement times. As the countryside filled with homesteaders, however, the traffic was forced to move onto road allowances. In 1906, the provincial government spent $91,000 on highways and local roads but the expenditure increased to $402,000 a year later. Since the municipal level of government was not introduced until 1909, the province assumed responsibility for local roads and highways. Although Scott was not directly involved in the details of planning the routes, his government certainly realized the political power that came with the building of roads. Any community that was bypassed did not have a bright future.

Another mode of transportation with even wider implications was the railway. In order for farmers to transport their grain to eastern Canada and the overseas market, rail links were essential. The province, meanwhile, needed branch lines to serve the newly settled communities, providing grain transportation as well as passenger service. The railway became the economic lifeline of all growing communities. If the railway bypassed a community, there was no hope that the centre would grow. A town without a railway could not attract grain elevators and without the farm trade, the centres withered and died. The CPR, to be sure, continued to provide a vital service, but in the early years it held a monopoly in western Canada, and as a result farmers felt like economic hostages. Farmers knew that if competing companies built more lines, the exorbitant freight rates would be reduced, and they pressed Scott's government to take action.

The problem of getting grain from the producer to the markets was not unique to Saskatchewan; the Alberta and Manitoba governments faced the same dilemma. After much consultation, the three prairie premiers (R.P. Roblin of Manitoba, A.C. Rutherford of Alberta, and Walter Scott) met in Brandon, Manitoba on November

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A political lampoon showing the western premiers fleeing the constitutional bogeyman. The caption reads: "Stage Manager: Splendid! Even the most critical audience of farmers will think you are really frightened. R.P. [Roblin], you're just bully; Walt [Scott] should look more concerned, and A.C. [Rutherford] might squeeze out a few tears."

26, 1908. There was some concern that the provinces lacked jurisdiction over interprovincial and international trade. A constitutional amendment would be required to give the provinces power over interprovincial trade, but the premiers were reluctant to go this far. Scott, in particular, hoped that with improved railway facilities, the problem of grain transportation would correct itself. However, when the problem of grain transportation did not disappear, Scott slowly came to a realize that he needed to find a "made in Saskatchewan" solution.

The Saskatchewan government resisted pressure to become involved directly in the building of rail lines because Scott believed that railways were the responsibility of the federal government. Yet, the Scott government saw the need to offer incentives to increase rail line construction and competition. The Manitoba government helped Mackenzie and Mann, owners of the Canadian Northern Railway, build branch lines with bond guarantees as early as the turn of the century. It was not until 1908 that the federal government, which provided bond guarantees for the construction of the main lines, persuaded the governments of both Alberta and Saskatchewan to offer similar bond guarantees to promote the construction of railway branch lines. Appropriate legislation was passed in both provinces in 1909. The threat that the settlers would leave their land if they did not have adequate rail line transportation for their grain, combined with federal pressure, led the two governments to become involved.

While the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway took advantage of the government bond guarantees, the CPR did not. Because the CPR did not have bond guarantees, it was not subject to the same government legal compulsion as those railway companies which had accepted the guarantees. To a citizen who was seeking compensation from the CPR, Scott wrote: "Unfortunately ... my opinion does not count for much with the CPR."

To illustrate the importance of railways in Saskatchewan politics, Scott delayed the first general election in 1905, waiting for Prime Minister Laurier to announce that the federal government would provide bond guarantees for the construction of a Canadian Northern branch line from the east to Regina to provide competition to the CPR. Scott even hinted to Laurier that he might not accept the leadership of the Saskatchewan Liberal party unless the prime minister announced the new rail line: "because upon these items depended to some degree the answer I have been recently thinking of giving, with regard to the important proposition that the convention [August 1905] may very likely present to me." Railways became important means of distributing patronage. Scott, for example, wrote to the federal Minister of Railways seeking assistance in awarding a particular company the contract to build a Grand Trunk Pacific line near Portage la Prairie, arguing that the company should receive the contract because they were "good friends of ours." Thus, the construction of rail lines was not just a matter of building lines in the areas of greatest need. A promise of a line or the start of construction often helped the sitting government member in his bid for re-election. The politics of railway building was not all glory, however, for while a new rail line pleased some citizens, others who had been overlooked felt alienated. Railway construction proved to be a continuous balancing act for the governments involved.

The transportation of grain was not the only problem facing the farmers. Even though railways were built to transport the grain, and branch lines were spreading across the province, the weakest point in the system involved the storage, loading and selling of the grain. Most elevators were owned by a few large companies, creating an impression that they had a monopoly. When the SGGA pressured the government to find a solution to the eastern companies that were stifling the western grain industry, Scott decided that a commission should be appointed to recommend solutions, and began the difficult task of finding the correct experts to serve. When searching for qualified commissioners, Scott often consulted with Walter Murray, President of the University of Saskatchewan. The political stripe of the potential commissioner was not necessarily an important factor. In writing to Murray, Scott said: "Where you procure him [the potential commissioner] matters not,—from either side of the line, — granted that he carries the qualifications and what these are you will understand much better than I do."

Scott was careful to portray the outward image of an independent commission, but, since every commission needed some "guidance," the government appointed people who were sympathetic to its philosophy. Scott wrote to Murray that "it will be a mistake to assume that no care is needed towards properly guiding the enquiry

which is underway." However, the government allowed the commissions latitude to search for all possible solutions. Scott saw the need for some freedom for the commissions: "Unless a condition is radically unsound and wrong a complete ventilation can do no ultimate harm and any condition which is unsound and wrong ought to be ventilated and reformed." Political considerations were to be only one factor. Jim Calder, Scott's key Cabinet colleague, echoed Scott's attitudes about the composition of the commissions. Writing to A.S. Smith, Calder stated:

> You will doubtless appreciate the importance of our securing the services of the best available men for the work in question. While political consideration [*sic*] have to be borne in mind there are other factors in a matter of this kind that cannot be overlooked.

The SGGA put considerable pressure on the Scott government by passing resolutions calling for it to purchase existing elevators and become involved in the grain-handling system. Notwithstanding this pressure and a general trend toward public ownership, Scott announced that a commission would be established to examine all avenues for a solution to the grain elevator problem. In most cases where Scott established a commission, he had a preferred general course of action and chose commissioners with similar preferences. It was then up to the commission to examine the matter carefully, to explore other options and to recommend a practical and detailed course of action. In the case of the grain elevators, Scott believed that having the government directly involved in the ownership and operation of the elevators would "be attended by grave economic and political dangers." Instead, he favoured a system somewhat similar to the telephone system that his government had just established whereby there would be "the granting of a measure of Government aid sufficient to make a locally owned system financially possible and leaving the responsibility of the maintenance and operation upon the local communities." Scott hoped a way could be found to avoid government ownership of the elevators, writing to his old friend and political ally, Jim Ross: "Probably some scheme will be worked out for a system of elevators free from public control but without the Government directly having to do with the operation." Even though no easy solution seemed apparent, Scott hoped that "the application of good common sense to such a question will remove the seeming difficulties." From the beginning of the commission, Scott believed a cooperative program could be a possible outcome.

On February 26, 1910, the government established the Magill commission, chaired by Professor Robert Magill, an economics expert from Dalhousie University, who was one of the candidates proposed by President Murray. The other two members of the commission were F.W. Green, the secretary treasurer of the SGGA, and George Langley, a director of the SGGA and a Liberal MLA. Since the SGGA had favoured a government-owned elevator company as one way of breaking the perceived eastern monopoly, one would assume that the commission would have recommended such a system. However, the SGGA historically had supported cooperative ventures. In the end, the commissioners favoured a system somewhat similar to the one Scott had outlined privately in his correspondence with Green and Langley — a system of cooperative ownership and operation with government financial backing.[6]

On October 28, 1910, Scott wrote to Magill saying that he was happy with the report and noting its unanimity. Representatives of the SGGA received advance copies of the report so that, Scott hoped, the association would react before he publicized his response. He intimated to the SGGA that he favoured the report but was careful not to commit himself publicly before knowing the reaction of the association. Scott also had to balance the business interests of the province. He urged Magill to handle the matter carefully so that the provincial business sector would not resent having the elevator company receive support from the province while the business community did not.

It was Scott himself, and not W.R. Motherwell, the minister of Agriculture, who introduced the bill in the Legislature to establish the Cooperative Elevator Company. Bill 25, entitled "An Act to Incorporate the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company," received third reading and Royal Assent on March 14, 1911. As time would show, the elevator company provided a successful service to the farming industry and was profitable as well. The company's board of directors came from the executive of the SGGA. Charles Dunning, a member of the executive of SGGA, became the first general manager of the elevator company.

In contrast to the Saskatchewan solution, the Manitoba government in 1910 bought or built grain elevators rather than supporting cooperatives; public ownership of community services was a prevalent idea in Manitoba at that time. The company bought less profitable elevators that the private grain elevator companies were more than willing to sell. The government responded to farmer pressure and built new elevators in locations that often did not have the grain volume to support a profitable elevator. Unfortunately for the Manitoba government, there were no incentives built into the system to encourage farmers to use the government system. Individual farmers had no financial stake in the government elevators. For these reasons the Manitoba grain elevators suffered great financial losses.

Through an independent but carefully chosen and guided commission, Scott came up with a solution that won the farmers over to his point of view. Once he had convinced the SGGA to share his point of view, this organization became the means of bringing the farming population on side.

Harold S. Patton called this a solution "without precedent in the history of governmental relations with agricultural producers."[7] Political scientist David E. Smith concluded that Scott had avoided the government ownership of the elevator system not out of ideological considerations but for practical reasons.[8] In his correspondence, Scott indicated privately that he favoured, ideologically, a cooperative elevator system (as he had with the telephone system) as a means of ensuring that the customer was fully behind the project. The farmer who had money invested in the telephone system or the grain elevator company would be more conscientious in using that service, thus ensuring that it was a profitable venture. The government, for Scott, would be involved in the background but would not take the responsibility away from the user groups. To be successful, Scott believed that the user had to assume much of the responsibility for the service, whether it was telephones or grain elevators. Consequently, this was an ideological decision as much as a practical one. The SGGA, a farmers' cooperative from its inception, had parted from its

original principles in demanding government-owned grain elevators. Scott, through a commission, had persuaded the largest agricultural lobby group in the province to return to its founding principles and to his own point of view.

Scott had been willing to compromise with the SGGA on several details but was able to convince it of the merits of his arguments. The Liberals supported cooperative action, protected by government regulation. In this case, it was the federal government that regulated the grain industry. In swinging the SGGA to the Liberal point of view, Scott was also able to steal the political thunder from the Conservative opposition, boasting to a political supporter that he had outsmarted Haultain, who was left out in the cold. Frederick Haultain, as leader of the opposition, had initially been on the side of the farmers, the SGGA and government ownership of the elevators, believing this to be a stable position. With the commission's report and Scott's ability to convince the SGGA to support cooperative action, Haultain was left in the position of either changing his point of view, or voting against the cooperative grain elevator system and thus against the interests of the farmers of Saskatchewan. He ultimately supported the philosophical point of view taken by Premier Roblin in Manitoba that the government should own the elevators and provide the service to the farmers. As it turned out, the Manitoba experiment proved to be a failure. Haultain, outmanoeuvred by Scott, was left supporting a failed point of view and was on the opposite side of the fence from the farmers. Scott was quite pleased with this state of affairs, writing to Jim Ross:

> We simply hammered Haultain all over the lot and he holds the short end now on every question, having been foolish enough to make a straight issue of the question of Elevators doubtless expecting that his Tory friends were going to succeed in stampeding the Grain Growers' Convention against our legislation.

The February 8 edition of the *Regina Leader* was enthusiastic in its report on the proceedings in the Legislature over the elevator question, proclaiming in a headline: "Premier Scott Delivers Great Speech on The New Grain Growers' Elevator Bill." The newspaper called Scott's speech "masterly and comprehensive." Revealing his philosophy on how to find a solution to a problem, Scott said in the Legislature that he and his colleagues did not know the answers to every important matter and thus they had "availed themselves of the services of experts." Scott concluded by saying: "My main reason for wishing the non-partisan support of all parties in the house for the measure is ... there will be vastly more reason to hope for the unanimous adoption of the solution by the farmers of the province, without which the fullest degree of success for the scheme cannot be expected." The speech ended with "loud and prolonged cheering."

Scott was also consistent in not wanting the government to make large financial commitments to solve the elevator problem. He favoured, for practical and ideological reasons, a cooperative system whereby the farmers would have to sign up to become members of the elevator company. In so doing, the farmers made a commitment to use the elevators, thus making the company financially viable. The government took some risk in providing financial backing, but this risk was significantly reduced if the farmers owned and operated the company.

The pattern of establishing commissions to examine problems related especially to the farm economy was followed again in December 1912, when the Scott government appointed a commission on hail insurance. The commission recommended a municipal hail insurance commission which would use cooperative principles to provide hail insurance to farmers and would operate at arm's length from the government. The solution for hail insurance followed the pattern already set by the telephone and grain elevator companies. The Cooperative Commission ensured that the public was willing to invest its own time and money in the venture and kept the government out of the day-to-day operation of the company. This system placed the responsibility for the programs squarely on the shoulders of the public involved.

The second major issue for the farming population of Saskatchewan was reciprocity (a program of lowering the tariffs with the Americans), and by March 1911, Walter Scott came out fully in favour of it. This became the key issue between the Liberals and Conservatives in the federal election of 1911, with the Laurier Liberals promoting reciprocity. In the West, the farmers saw the lowering of Canadian tariffs on goods imported from the United States as a way to reduce agricultural input costs. It would be less expensive to import farm machinery and binder twine into western Canada from the United States than from Ontario or Quebec if there was no tariff. The tariff was seen for what it was: a protection of eastern Canadian manufacturing interests at the expense of western agricultural profits. The federal Conservatives, led by Robert Borden, defeated Laurier on this particular issue and formed the government. Saskatchewan voters had supported the Liberals but the national trend was against them.

Even though Manitoba farmers had much to gain from reciprocity, the 1911 election results in Manitoba were somewhat different from those in Saskatchewan. Eight out of ten Manitoba federal ridings voted Conservative, with voters in Winnipeg and the railway towns seeing a vested interest in the east-west rail trade, which was protected by the tariff. Winnipeg, as a railway centre and gateway to western Canada, feared that reciprocity could increase the north-south trade with the United States along the Sault railway line. If reciprocity was achieved, it was possible that Moose Jaw or Regina would become a larger trade distribution centre than Winnipeg. W.L. Morton attributed this Conservative support in Manitoba to "old Ontario loyalties and British Canadian nationalism."[9] Saskatchewan and Alberta did not follow Manitoba's lead and elected mostly Liberal members.

Notwithstanding the Laurier government's defeat, Scott was delighted with how he had been able to outmanoeuvre Haultain yet again. In supporting the Conservative national stance, Haultain supported the tariffs, but in so doing, he once again alienated the farm sector of the Saskatchewan population. In a letter to W.M. Martin (a Saskatchewan Liberal Member of Parliament), Scott took full credit for outsmarting Haultain but was disappointed that the federal Liberals gave him no credit for this political victory. Scott favoured a trade-preference policy with England because it would be a "token of Imperial relationship" and would create

a tax decrease for the Canadian consumer. In 1915, Scott chided a colleague in British Columbia for his rejection of reciprocity in the 1911 election, arguing that the fruit growers in that province would suffer from the tariffs because their domestic market was small in comparison to the domestic market available to American growers. Scott revealed that at one point he had considered moving to British Columbia due to his asthma, but because of the reciprocity vote he had decided against this: "I want to live amongst a people whom [where] there may be at least a saving remnant of lovers of freedom in which great and actual development and progress is possible."

Scott was able to capitalize on the pro-reciprocity stance of Saskatchewan voters when he called a provincial election in 1912. Scott was later to state that one of the reasons the Liberals won the 1912 provincial election was the public's support of free trade. According to Scott, the sweeping verdict given by the electors of Saskatchewan on July 11

> proves conclusively that the cause of wider markets and freer trade is still a remarkably live question in the West and will continue to be until the people in this part of the Dominion obtain what they feel they are justly entitled to. The outcome of our recent contest is greatly encouraging those who profess allegiance to the cause of Liberalism and the principles for which our party stands.

To Scott, Liberalism meant freer trade.

Toward the end of Scott's second term in government, the issue of ownership of Crown lands again came to the fore. During the autonomy bill debates in 1905, Scott had reluctantly agreed to leave the Crown lands with the Dominion government as long as there was proper compensation paid to the provinces. Scott went so far as to say that even after the West was filled with settlers, there likely would be no need for the provinces to assume responsibility for the remaining Crown lands. Haultain and the Provincial Rights Party had argued that the federal government should have granted the land to the provinces. By February 6, 1911, Scott wrote to W.M. Martin complaining that the federal government was undercutting his policy on Crown lands, emphasizing that the Saskatchewan Liberal party's stance was to ask for all lands that were not suitable for homesteading. The federal government was to keep the agricultural land so as to be able to continue the immigration policy and to continue to pay the financial subsidies to the provinces. Scott held out for the greatest financial gain for the province. Publicly he supported provincial ownership of Crown lands but was willing to use this stance to gain greater subsidies from the federal government in lieu of this ownership. Since the federal grants were more generous for homestead land, Scott was content to leave them with the government in Ottawa. However, in Scott's opinion, the federal grants for the marginal lands were inadequate, and he concluded that these lands should be transferred to the province. On March 29, 1911, Scott wrote to Laurier claiming that Saskatchewan was $800,000 richer because of the federal financial subsidies in lieu of the Crown lands.

In a debate in the Legislature on March 17, 1911, Scott argued that the

province would be better off if it had control of the mineral rights and the lands in the north. The federal government could continue to control the arable land but the remainder should be transferred to the province. After Laurier's defeat in the 1911 federal election, Saskatchewan pushed even harder to gain the Crown lands. On January 8, 1913, Scott moved a resolution in the Legislative Assembly calling on the federal government to transfer Crown lands to the province, though he had to explain why his position on Crown lands was different from what it had been in 1905. He insisted that his new stance was not due to Borden's election in Ottawa, stating: "I have every reason to believe that Saskatchewan is being systematically neglected by the Dominion agencies." The federal government had no administrative policy concerning coal and other natural resources. Since these resources were under federal jurisdiction in the three prairie provinces and nowhere else in Canada, there was no policy to guide the public service in how to handle these resources. Scott viewed this bureaucratic inaction as neglect and felt that Saskatchewan had to demand greater control of public lands, particularly on non-homestead land. The timing of Scott's increased pressure for control of the Crown lands though was coincidental with the defeat of the Laurier government, but it is not impossible that he was playing politics with the Crown lands of the province in order to embarrass the new Borden administration.

The lack of adequate credit was another serious problem plaguing the Saskatchewan agricultural community. Farmers had short-term loans from merchants or banks, but also mortgages to cover the purchase of machinery or land. Even though the mortgages were intended to be short-term, farmers were usually able to pay the interest but unable to clear the principal, resulting in the renewal of the mortgage. With commodity prices, freight rates and operating costs all beyond their control, farmers felt vulnerable to outside interests. As farmers accused the CPR of robbing them of their hard-earned cash, so too were the banks, with their interest rates, guilty of the same charge.

The need for farming to be improved to create a better way of life for the whole province was reflected in the Saskatchewan slogan: "Better farming, better business, better living." In September 1912, Scott travelled to Germany to study its agricultural conditions and its system of agricultural credit. He was particularly interested in the German *Raiffeisenschaften*, which were cooperative institutions offering vital services to the public. "Cheap money" had been a plank in the 1912 election campaign. Determined to find a solution to the farmers' need for available loans, in January 1913 Scott initiated the process of establishing a commission to investigate this matter. The Saskatchewan Royal Commission was appointed to review recommendations from an international commission, made up of representatives of agricultural states and provinces, which had reviewed agricultural credit conditions in Europe. As was his usual practice, Scott consulted with Walter Murray, who agreed that Dr. E.H. Oliver, the founder and Principal of St. Andrew's College (a theological college on the University of Saskatchewan campus), would be a suitable candidate. J.H. Haslam, Scott's political friend and former business partner, together with Charles Dunning, General Manager of the Cooperative Elevator

Company, were the other two members of the commission. After travelling throughout Canada and to Europe looking for solutions, the commission found that the lack of cheap money was a problem for farmers around the world. When the European farmers organized themselves in cooperatives, better and cheaper agricultural credit became available, which in turn led to a healthier agricultural industry. As a result, rural life became "more comfortable, mentally more satisfying and socially more enjoyable."[10]

The commission presented its report to the Legislature on October 15, 1913, recommending a system whereby the farmers would be able to obtain credit on a cooperative basis. Once again, the provincial government would offer financial backing but the system itself would be controlled by the farmers. The Farm Mortgage Association was to charge only enough interest to cover its costs and to establish amortization periods so that the farmers could pay off their debts. The Royal Commission believed that benefits from the new agricultural credit system would "extend to every department of our moral, social and political life." The report stressed cooperation, arguing that farmers working together, with government help at arm's length, would improve the standard of living for all of the citizens of the province.

On December 19, 1913 Bill 66, designed to create the Saskatchewan Cooperative Farm Mortgage Association, was given Royal Assent in the Legislative Assembly. However, with the outbreak of the war in Europe the following August, credit was no longer available and the government could not implement the Agricultural Credit program. Military financial requirements took precedence over agricultural credit needs.

Since outstanding farm debt remained a problem for the farming industry, Scott saw the need for the government to step in to protect the farmers, though he was wary of doing so because he did not want to destroy the province's credit rating. By the fall of 1914, the Scott government was under great pressure to place a moratorium on farm loans to protect the farmers' interests. The government applied pressure to the loan companies in an attempt to stop them from foreclosing on farmers. By September 26, 1914, Premier Scott announced the government had decided not to introduce moratorium legislation but to work to protect individual cases where necessary, and where the war caused the debt problem:

> After careful study the Government has come to conclusion that there is too much danger of the credit of the Province being irretrievably damaged by the enforcement of a moratorium to make it a safe or admissible procedure.

Although the Legislative Assembly passed an act in September 1914, allowing the government to postpone certain debts of farmers who had enlisted, Scott did not use these powers. Rather, he tried to use his personal influence with loan companies to protect farmers, but was only partially successful. By October 1915, with the farm debt picture looking more stable, Scott was less inclined to interfere with the thorny farm debt situation. He was reluctant to have government interfere with "private business affairs," writing:

> I quite agree that nothing but the most extreme cuase [*sic*] could justify

> interference by a Government between debtor and creditor but I submit that such extreme cause did exist in the autumn of 1914. Fortunately this Province has been favored in 1915 and I think the necessity for the practice which was followed last winter is past and gone.

Throughout his premiership, Scott was reluctant to intervene in agricultural commerce for fear that this action would frighten the "Old Country Capitalist" and do more harm to the provincial economy: "I wish you to believe therefore that the Saskatchewan Government has gone no further in the legislation respecting this matter than we believe to be absolutely imperative." Scott was true to his principles even during the harsh economic climate of the war.

Scott met the situation of farm loans with a typical reaction: reluctant to have the government interfere, he nonetheless saw the need to have the farmers protected. He implemented some short-term solutions and used personal influence where possible. He replied to countless letters from farmers seeking financial assistance with sympathy and empathy, but in most cases Scott had to report that nothing more could be done:

> It is a very unfortunate case which you [a farmer seeking help] have suffered through and I can assure you that you have my very best sympathy. If the Government could possibly help you any further it would be done but I am convinced that there is nothing more which we can do.

On the other hand, Scott was impatient with any farmer who was in financial trouble due to his own foolishness:

> In reality no law can absolutely prevent men being foolish. Take away men's responsibility, that is to say, protect them completely against the possibility of their own foolishness and very soon we would have a set of weaklings in the country. It is only by withstanding temptation that character is made strong.

On these occasions, Scott demonstrated his Presbyterian work ethic. Government was there to protect the weak, but only if circumstances beyond their control had caused their plight.

The right of women to hold property in Saskatchewan was another challenge for the Scott government in its third legislative mandate. Since most of the property in Saskatchewan was agricultural land, the issue of joint property rights to the homestead quarter was of concern to the government. Scott was at first reluctant to intervene between a husband and wife relating to property rights, convinced that this was another area where the government should not interfere. For example, Scott wrote to Mrs. Jennie White that: "There are some spheres in which law is powerless and the matrimonial estate when one of the parties turns out to be heartless and bad, whether it be the man or the woman, is such a sphere." Mrs. White did not give up and wrote the premier again on May 14, 1915, urging the government to pass legislation giving married women the right to ownership of property, particularly farm land that they had jointly accumulated with their husbands. Scott replied that he could not believe any man could act so badly toward her: "I quite understand, however, that a mere expression of sympathy is of very little use to you." By

the following July, Mrs. White's perseverance paid off when the Scott government introduced legislation to protect a woman's right to property.

It is not hard to tell why Scott was able to win ever larger majorities each election. With his sympathetic ear to listen to the people's complaints and the legislative reaction when necessary, he convinced the voters that he cared about their plight. Scott had to overcome his reluctance to have government become involved in the daily lives of people, but he was prepared to act with the force of law when the need was there. A greater right for women — the right to vote — was to be granted by the Scott government in the year to follow.

Not only was Walter Scott proud of his government's many successes, he had outmanoeuvred his opponent, Frederick Haultain. However, Scott's healthy respect for his political opponent was tainted by pity for the plight of the leader of the opposition: "He [Haultain] is in reality not a bad person at bottom. His main difficulty, I think, is that he has not sufficient back-bone and permits unwise associates to sway him in wrong directions." Scott had shown an ability to listen to the wishes of the people and had been able to adjust his sails to the direction of the public wind in time to remain popular. He had been able to outmanoeuvre Haultain to his opponent's detriment.

Scott's record in listening to the farmers' concerns and appointing experts to find solutions had paid off for the Liberals. On reciprocity, grain elevators, hail insurance, agricultural credit, and rural telephone companies, Scott had the interests of the farmer and rural residents at heart, and in so doing, was able to ensure that his government remained popular with the majority of the voters. His government's policies made agriculture the cornerstone of the province's economy. Services were offered to the people of Saskatchewan to encourage them to continue living on the farm. Agriculture was not only good politics, but it was a healthy way of life. Scott believed that if farmers could be as comfortable on the farm as in town, they would stay on the farm and continue to grow the wheat crops that already earned Saskatchewan the reputation as "the breadbasket of the world."

Chapter 7
Impending Calamity

[1905-1916]

Illustration by Grant Welke

One night he went to bed late, and found it difficult to sleep; thoughts raced through his brain, scenes and images forming and reforming with inconceivable rapidity; at last he fell asleep, to awake an hour or two later in an intolerable agony of mind. His heart beat thick and fast, and a shapeless horror seemed to envelop him. He struck a light and tried to read, but a ghastly and poisonous fear of he knew not what seemed to clutch at his mind. At last he fell into a broken sleep; but when he rose in the morning, he knew that some mysterious evil had befallen him… . For that day and for many days he wrestled with a fierce blackness of depression.

— **Janet Oppenheim,** *"Shattered Nerves"*

Even though the quotation on the opposite page is not about Walter Scott, it describes the depths of depression that he often experienced. From early childhood, Scott had suffered from chronic illnesses. Asthma was a continual complaint as he attended school and was one of the reasons given for his move West at age seventeen. Pneumonia struck him in 1906-07, followed by a breakdown. When did his mental illness begin and how did it affect his political career?

The year 1911 was a watershed in Scott's deteriorating health. For five years following this breakdown, Scott was able to cover his symptoms and, with winter holidays, continue his political career. However, during 1912, Scott missed the annual Session of the Legislature and the official opening of the Legislative Building. He returned to Saskatchewan only for the election campaign but left again shortly after polling day. From this point onward, Scott was unable to regain his health, which ultimately led to his retirement four years later.

At the turn of the century, psychologists and physicians, not having developed an understanding of manic depression, attempted various cures by trial and error, with little success. In the Victorian and Edwardian eras in Britain, and to a great extent in Canada, physicians thought that more women than men suffered from depression. A paternalistic society controlled women who were "insane" and institutionalized them for their ailments.[1] Silas Weir Mitchell of Philadelphia, a well-known therapist in the treatment of depression, prescribed rest, excessive feeding, massage, seclusion, and electricity. He intended this therapy to build up the patient's fat and blood as a way of restoring his or her mental health. Critics of this therapy claimed that Mitchell merely exercised control over women in his clinic until they rediscovered their docile ways and were again subservient to their husbands. Notwithstanding this criticism, Mitchell had a following of people who believed that he had a cure for this dreaded and debilitating disease.

One of the most common symptoms of depression was insomnia and its accompanying feeling of helplessness and an inability to make decisions. People with depression in the Victorian era took to the "invalid's sofa" or undertook long voyages, usually by sea, in search of a cure and "renewed vitality."[2] Medical science had yet to discover the connection between ailments of the mind and the body. Physicians knew little about a cure for this ailment, often called a breakdown, nervous collapse, exhaustion, or prostration. Diagnosis depended upon gender and class; women were more often diagnosed with nervous collapse than were men. If a person of a lower class exhibited these symptoms, it was diagnosed as "lunacy." For a person of the upper classes, the same ailment was called "nervous collapse."

Costly private clinics located in quiet rural settings provided treatment for the upper classes through peace and tranquillity, as well as seclusion from the daily events of life. Anonymity, if the patient so desired, was another benefit offered by the exclusive private clinics.

At the turn of the last century there was little disgrace in suffering from depression. Nervous breakdown was a "torture to be endured, not a sin to be concealed."[3] Yet this posed a problem for the people who subscribed to the Victorian work ethic in an age of productivity and ambition. It was fashionable for the well-to-do to take a rest at a clinic or to travel extensively by sea. However, there was an inner conflict between this life of relaxation and the work ethic that was promoted after the industrial revolution.

Another prevailing attitude at the time was that each person had only a limited amount of energy. Once this energy was depleted, a person needed prolonged periods of rest to restore vitality. Women had much less vitality than men:

> Although there existed no single prescription for the cure of the shattered nerves, virtually all of the therapeutic methods employed during the Victorian and Edwardian decades sought to address both somatic and psychological distress, restoring the depleted supplies of nerve force that precipitated the collapse and calming whatever form of mental strain exacerbated it.[4]

Many doctors considered blood-letting and purging as a way of treating mental illness. Patients gave up blood or took laxatives to rid the body of wastes in the belief that the mind would then be able to function more clearly. Massage and electroshock therapy were also thought to be beneficial in producing a cure.

Dr. Weir Mitchell, neurologist and author of *Blood and Fat*, tried many of these therapies at his clinic in Philadelphia.[5] Outdoor exercise with fresh air was part of the cure. In Britain, depression seemed to be common amongst the intellectual elite. Charles Darwin took up horseback riding as a means to a cure, while T.H. Huxley, Francis Galton and Michael Faraday were other well-known individuals in British society who tried various cures for their "nervous exhaustion." As for outdoor exercise, physicians recommended horseback riding, golf or gardening:

> They [the doctors] wanted to induce healthy fatigue, the kind that promised a good night's sleep, without need of sedatives or soporifics; they equally wanted to avoid exhaustion, which would jeopardize the invalid's supplies of nerve force, carefully accumulated during sound sleep and periods of inactivity.[6]

Therapists also prescribed getting away from the source of the stress by taking a long sea voyage, believing that sea level offered a cure, that the ozone by the sea could provide the climate for restoring the body's vital energy. To travel to another climate for a cure was called "climatotherapy." During this travel, the patient was usually accompanied by a friend or a medical attendant. The ocean voyage held a further advantage. Not only was the patient at sea level, but the travel was slow and leisurely with few connections to worry about and no concerns about luggage. Once on board, life became serene until arrival at the destination. If the voyage included sunshine and a warmer climate, as found in the Mediterranean or the Caribbean, this was the source of a magical cure. Understandably, all of these therapies

required money, with only the wealthy able to afford to be away from work for extended periods of time and to travel on ships to exotic places. There was no consensus as to the cause of depression but people tried many cures. With the prescription for a cure at a clinic, where doctors were usually the owners, the cure was a profitable venture for the doctor. Yet for any wealthy patient trying to find a way out of depression and/or insomnia, life became a continual search for a cure.

Scott was one of these patients and no stranger to ill health. In his unpublished autobiography, he described his bouts of asthma that followed him to the North-West Territories, where he had hoped that the fresh air would provide a cure. Later in life, Scott admitted, in his correspondence to close friends, that he had had several "breakdowns." It is difficult to know when this condition first manifested itself. As early as 1902, while a nember of Parliament in Ottawa, Scott spent a month in a hospital in Montreal. In the fall of that year, he travelled to Banff to consult with a Dr. Brent, and in January and February 1903, to San Francisco for an appointment with a specialist. He did not specify the ailment.

In December 1906, Scott was bedridden with pneumonia for more than a month. On his doctor's orders he, with a friend, George Brown (later lieutenant governor of Saskatchewan), and his physician, Dr. Lowe, travelled to the Caribbean, intending to be away approximately two weeks, but the voyage extended into more than four months. Jessie, Scott's wife, joined him part way through the southern trip. The first indication that this trip might have been for something more than pneumonia was in a May 24, 1907 letter from George Brown to Scott. By this point, Brown and Lowe had returned to Regina and Scott was travelling in the southern United States with his wife. Upon urging Scott to write letters, Brown mentioned that Scott's daughter, Dorothy, revealed that her father was not writing letters "at all lately." Scott was normally a prolific letter writer, but as seen later in his life, he found that he could not write letters when he was depressed. This inability to write letters in May 1907 may be the first sign that his trip south was in search for relief from depression, although he did not identify his ailment as such at the time. There is no evidence from his correspondence or news reports that he had a problem with alcohol.

Because of Scott's illnesses, he did not travel in rural parts of Saskatchewan during the winter months:

> since the pneumonia attack which I [Scott] had just three years ago [1906], my colleagues aided and abetted by the medical tyrant [his doctor] who presumes to dictate about my habits and health, have been averse to my risking winter trips except to the South Seas.

The trip to the Caribbean, during the early winter of 1907, was so successful that he repeated it again the following winter even though he had not had another bout of pneumonia. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" was obviously the motto of the day.

Feeling that he had to justify to the voters why he did not travel in the province in winter, Scott gave asthma and the "work of session" as his reasons. He found that:

> In the West after the storm windows are put on the small hotels and school houses and buildings are practically sealed tight and very soon after a crowd congregates there is no oxygen left in the air.

Scott had an asthma attack just before the last campaign rally during the December 1905 provincial election, at age 38, thus missing the meeting because of a lack of oxygen in the room. It is possible that this was an early symptom of his psychological state, worsened by anxiety about speaking in front of a large crowd. Ill health evoked a word of caution from Scott. In writing to Annie B. (Nan) Telfer, his cousin, in Calgary, he urged her to take it easy. Hard work would not kill anyone, but:

> Don't go too fast; late hours are not conducive to good health, and we never appreciate the advantage of good health until we lose it.

This bit of advice was a harbinger of times to come for Walter Scott.

Notwithstanding that Scott was away from his office so much, he was proud of the talent in his Cabinet and felt reassured that he had a "splendid team" supporting him. J.H. Lamont was acting premier on Scott's first medical absence, but after Lamont was appointed to the Bench, Jim Calder filled in for Scott for any absences during the remainder of Scott's term as premier. Scott rationalized his absences to his caucus by writing that it might be good for the people of the province to see that, when he was away, the government continued to function well without him. The people could see that it was not a "one man government." Scott knew that he had to be away for part of the year, especially during the short winter days, when he sought the warm sunshine of the Caribbean, the southern United States or the Mediterranean. Walter and Jessie went on a Mediterranean cruise of approximately four months during the winter of 1907-08. Even though Scott had a good team "stoking the home fires" while he was away, he felt guilty because he was not able to put in a full year's work. His need to rest and to have a break from the stress was in conflict with his Victorian work ethic.

Scott's illnesses created delays in the government's programs. For example, the government delayed the commencement of the architectural competition for the Legislative Building for several months because of Scott's voyage to the south. Cabinet postponed the 1908 Session and the decision on the site of the new university for the same reason. The allocation of the judicial districts in 1907, and the introduction of Direct Legislation in 1912, were all decisions that the government put on hold, pending Scott's return.

Rather than being critical of Scott for his absences, the public viewed his illnesses with sympathy and understanding. Scott's many friends sent letters of support, wishing him a restful recovery. J.W. Dafoe and Clifford Sifton, of the *Manitoba Free Press*, sent a letter of support during Scott's bout of pneumonia in 1907. Dafoe resorted to an old newspaper custom of writing a eulogistic obituary notice for his friend Scott — newspaper custom had it that if an obituary notice was prepared, the men "for whom this is done, invariably recover." Scott indeed did regain his health, much to the relief of his friends at the *Manitoba Free Press* and Liberals across Saskatchewan.

Whether it was the fear of contracting pneumonia again or depression due to the lack of sunshine in the winter, Scott made it a practice to head south every winter.[7]

By late December 1909, he reported to a friend that his health was so good that there was no excuse to go south. He noted that the work of a politician was never done and found that he could not get away until the doctor ordered it. By mid-winter, Scott was hoping that the doctor would order another respite. Even though Scott was frequently away, he worked long hours in the months that he was in Saskatchewan, as if making up for lost time. Scott squeezed the Session, the legislative program, and the election campaigns into a six-month time period.

When Scott returned from his first major episodic illness in 1907, 700 Liberals from Saskatchewan and neighbouring provinces attended a gala dinner to honour him as "the youngest and one of the most able provincial premiers in confederated Canada." In fine form, Scott delivered a rousing speech, proclaiming proudly the accomplishments of his government. Because he had been away four months, he came back full of energy to tackle the problems of the province. The *Morning Leader* reported that Scott announced:

> I am prouder than ever of my position in the province — prouder than ever of the Liberal party in Saskatchewan — prouder than ever of my citizenship in the Dominion of Canada.

The Attorney General, W.F.A. Turgeon, a loyal Scott supporter, declared that Scott was a student in the Wilfrid Laurier school of politics. Turgeon compared Scott to Laurier, saying:

> He [Scott] is endowed with the same energy, the same honesty of purpose, the same uprightness of character, the attributes of statesmanship, and tonight we have no fear for the future of the party or the province with Walter Scott at the head of affairs.

According to the Morning Leader, whose account filled three pages, everyone had a good time at the dinner, eating, drinking and listening to speeches. The dinner finally concluded at 3:15 a.m. as people filed out to view the sun rising in the east. The Morning Leader and the Liberals were happy to have their leader home again. Even though Scott generally did not like formal dinners, he did appreciate the tribute paid to him on this occasion: "the sight of the gathering that night obliterated for the time being all my natural dislike of being made the particular object of attention." Even the *Canadian Annual Review* mentioned the dinner in honour of Scott: "It was a pronounced tribute to a politician still young in public life; with a dominant note of personal feeling and regard throughout."

Scott received an engraved guest book which contained the signatures of all of the dinner guests. The inscription stated that the Liberals present believed that they needed Scott's "sound judgement, wise guidance and patriotic statesmanship" in "this young Western country in the early years of its Provincial development." It was fitting and symbolic that the first signature on the list was J.H. Ross, his oldest friend, and the last was J.A. Calder, Scott's close friend and deputy premier.

Even though Scott had a strong and loyal Cabinet and caucus, he noticed that he was "out of touch" when he returned from his extended trips. During Scott's absences, Calder attempted to brief him on the issues in the province by means of letter or telegram but, nonetheless, Scott still felt unprepared for the first few weeks upon his return.

Scott had received an endorsement in the 1908 provincial election. His government gained a larger majority than in 1905 but his two strong and faithful allies, W.R. Motherwell and J.H. Calder, lost their seats. The constituency of Regina South had chosen Calder in 1905 but, due to redistribution, he ran in the Milestone constituency in 1908. Motherwell ran in North Qu'Appelle in both 1905 and 1908. At this time, MLAs could contest the election in more than one constituency but Calder and Motherwell ran in only one riding each and lost. Fortunately for them, due to the following federal general election, two Liberal MLAs resigned their provincial seats to run federally, thus creating two vacancies. Calder and Motherwell won in the resulting by-elections. Scott went to great effort to ensure the re-election of his two strongest Cabinet members.

By 1909, either because of the initial defeat of Motherwell and Calder, or because of his illness, Scott began to have doubts about his political leadership. During his times of doubt, he wondered why he had ever entered politics to begin with: "Whenever I get time to think at all I wonder at the perversity of a fate which precipitated a peace-loving person like me into such a life of contention." To a political friend and Alberta Cabinet minister who had just given his notice to resign, Scott wrote that he would like to make the same escape from politics:

> When I made the beginning with you nine years ago I had no thought of making politics a life work but it looks now as if the only way I shall ever become free will be by defeat at the polls, which consideration inclines me to envy you the release which you are obtaining of your own motion and so much more agreeably.

It is apparent that Scott was finding that the change in climate was not bringing about a cure for his illnesses. He wrote to his personal physician, Dr. Lowe, at a time when he was sleeping two hours less per night than was his normal: "In reality I do not think I need any change of climate but simply a change of occupation." He filled his letters with his concern about how he could not sleep a full night like before. He had periods of time when he had a constant sense of impending doom.

By March 1911, with the Session in a turmoil because of an opposition filibuster over the issue of voters' lists and the possibility of another snap election, Scott was making longer and more agitated speeches in the House. He wrote to J.A. Aikin, editor of the *Saskatoon Phoenix*, that he was feeling fine but sleeping less. He noted: "my friends here seem to think that I have become too highly nervous." When J.A. Calder, Lieutenant Governor George Brown, and other Liberals began to show concern that Scott was behaving erratically, they urged him to leave Regina before the end of the Session. Scott agreed to go only after he had delivered his speech on provincial rights.

On March 16, 1911, following a lengthy six-and-one-half hour speech by Frederick Haultain, Scott spoke for seven hours in debate on the issue of Crown lands and provincial rights. After his speech, he waited in the caucus room to meet with all of his Liberal members to explain why he was leaving in the midst of the Session, and he wrote to many of his friends explaining his actions:

> At the same time my friends in the House have got it into their heads that I am approaching a nervous break-down and I satisfy them I have consented to skip out West for a little while.

Scott reported that his Liberal friends had been urging him to give shorter speeches and not to participate in every debate in the House. The *Morning Leader* reported:

> It was stated that his [Scott's] own health was to some extent the health of the party and that on the score of health he should take less part in the debates of the House.

During debate in the House, Scott said: "If my friends, (turning to his supporters) see fit to send me to the stable for repairs after the race, why, I am entirely in their hands."

Not all of the farewells given to Scott were sympathetic. The *Standard*, a newspaper with Conservative leanings, wrote that Scott was setting a record over the past twelve months. He "has stayed in Regina three months continuously, something he has not done before in that period."

Initially, Scott did not want to admit that he was experiencing a breakdown. To Calder, he wrote:

> in perfect sincerity I say that I have felt so well physically for at least six years past as I am right now, and am positive that I have never in my life been so well mentally.

Scott noted that he had agreed to depart while in a moment of "weakness," but felt guilty leaving during Session. Although he had missed an entire Session in 1907, this was the first time that he had departed during Session. He justified his absence by writing to Calder:

> no Canadian Province loses anything by its public men taking an occasional spell away from work and benefitting by the education of travel to other countries.

Not only was Scott delivering long and frequent speeches in the House and interrupting the debate with continual interjections, he was also writing lengthy letters to friends to justify his actions. This was a sign that he was in a manic state. That he tried to mend fences and restore friendships was a sign of his condition. Clifford Sifton noticed that Scott had been "unfriendly and disloyal." Scott's friends saw a change in his manner. The national press reported Scott's illness and absence from the Chamber. Feeling compelled to write to all of his friends explaining himself, he said he was feeling fine and felt that Calder had become "excited unnecessarily." Scott wrote that Calder felt that he was having a "nervous break-down." Scott's actions seemed to confirm that Calder had assessed the situation correctly. To the "Chief" (Wilfrid Laurier), Scott reported that he had been sleeping well until New Year's, 1911. Then, rather than his usual nine to twelve hours of sleep, he found that even though he was free of worry, he was only sleeping four hours per night. Scott wrote that his friends noted his "state of tension."

Scott reported to Jim Ross that Calder even resorted to having the Lieutenant Governor talk to Scott to try to persuade him to take a rest. Just before adjournment of the Legislative Assembly, when Scott was about to leave the Chamber, Haultain rose to express his farewell to the Premier, wishing him a speedy recovery. According to the *Morning Leader*, "loud applause" greeted this friendly note of compassion.

Liberals persuaded Scott to leave Regina for his own health and for the sake of

the party. Calder must have breathed a sigh of relief as Scott boarded the train for Victoria. With Scott in such a high state of tension, would he explode in the Chamber and embarrass his party? Once Scott was at the coast and at sea level, he found that he had a more restful sleep. When he was away from the Legislature, Scott gained insight into his state of health. Upon taking up golf, he wrote to Ross: "In truth, I am of the opinion, that it will be not at all a bad game for me to spend some time at. The fresh air is the thing."

Jim Calder was quick to control any potential political damage after Scott left Regina. Calder advised Scott that he had reassured Jim Ross that Scott needed a little rest but was otherwise fine, yet Calder was insistent that Scott should take a lengthy holiday. Calder's advice was: "Don't show your nose in Regina till about May 8th." At first, in his manic state, Scott apparently could not rest and wrote letters to colleagues back in Saskatchewan. Calder sent him a stinging letter telling him to stick to "his fishing" and to give his "thinking apparatus a rest," but then offered some gentler advice:

> Have a little sense Walter — Even if it does go against the grain take heed of the advice of your friends. I know it is hard to give in and especially for a man of your temperament — but — oh well you know and I need say no more.

Scott's supporters, however, were quick to come to his defence. When there were rumours about the possibility of Scott's retirement in May 1911, T.M. Bryce, a party worker and an expert on electoral boundaries, sent a letter to Calder telling him that only the Conservatives would be happy to know that Scott might retire. Bryce gave Calder a warning: "I trust to you and your colleagues to do all in your power to maintain the present status, for Scott's personality remains one of the principal assets of the party throughout the country. It matters little who bears the brunt of the work — some understand — still the faith of the people is pinned to Scott and deservedly so for he has ever kept faith with us." If Calder had been planning an early retirement for Scott, he could see that this would not be acceptable to many of the party faithful.

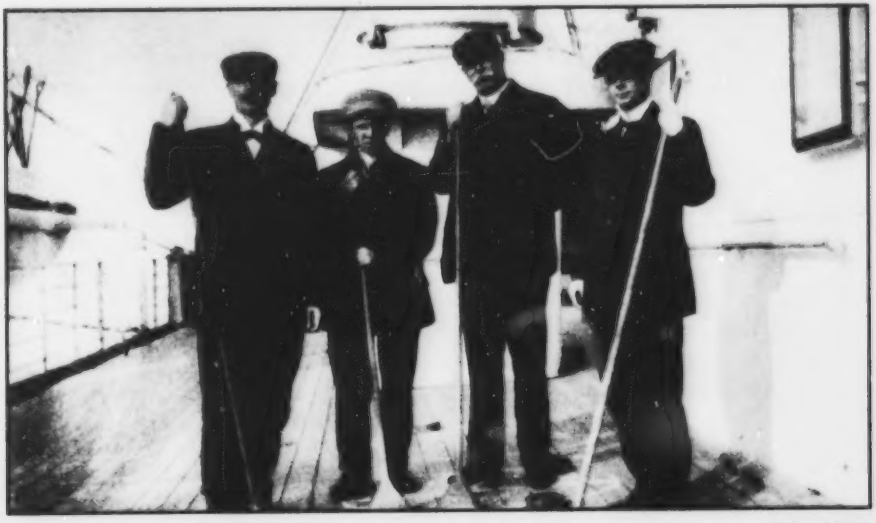
Calder replied that there was no truth to the rumours of Scott's retirement. All Scott needed was a little rest throughout the summer and, when he returned, he would be "ready for any kind of work." Scott had full confidence and high praise for his acting premier, Jim Calder: "But for his executive and constructive ability we should not to-day occupy the splendid position before the Province that I flatter myself we do occupy." Scott felt that Calder was the most capable man he had ever met.

Once Scott got away from the "hurly burly" of Regina, he saw that he needed a rest but he reassured his friend, J.W. Dafoe, that he was not an "invalid." His inability to sleep caused his ill health and thus he was "all keyed up." To the Liberal Whip, Gerhard Ens, Scott wrote that he was close to a breakdown but he had to keep up public appearances. Once he was removed from the tension of Session, Scott realized "how close to the edge of the precipice I have been and still am." Scott conceded that his political friends had been correct in urging him to take a holiday. He realized that he was risking his own health and that of the Liberal Party.

After a rest of nearly three months in Victoria, Scott returned to Regina just in time to leave for London, England, to attend the coronation of King George V. In making the arrangement for staying in London, Scott noted that he and Mrs. Scott were representing the province in an official capacity and that he wanted an apartment to suit the occasion: "Inasmuch as my expenses will be defrayed by the Province I shall not be under the usual necessity of practicing [*sic*] severe economy." The coronation was a chance to be presented to the King and to make the rounds at dinners and receptions, but the excitement of such a busy social life brought on a recurrence of Scott's insomnia. As a result, after the coronation, Walter left Jessie in London for four weeks as he and his private secretary, J.W. McLeod, took a cruise ship to Norway.

SAB R-A6018

Scott and his close friend, Lieutenant Governor George Brown, were frequent travelling companions. Here the two men are pictured during the 1911 trip to England for the coronation of King George V.



SAB 4-A6019

In keeping with medical beliefs at the time, ocean voyages were seen as relaxing and therapeutic. Here, Scott (left) and Brown (second from right) pose with two unidentified companions during a game of shuffleboard.

SAB R-A6126

Walter and Jessie Scott, in formal attire, at the coronation of King George V in 1911.

Upon their return to London, the Scotts rushed back to Saskatchewan to participate in the federal election that had just been called. Scott campaigned hard for Laurier, and particularly for reciprocity. He was clear in defending the farmers against the high cost of the tariff. Eastern resistance to eliminating the tariff nonetheless defeated the Laurier government. Through the efforts of Scott and others, Saskatchewan had stayed loyal to the Liberals and reciprocity. Scott noted that, even though the Laurier government had been defeated, at least they had been defeated on a principle and not on a scandal.

Having experienced a breakdown, Scott received many letters of support. Problem with nerves seemed to be a common affliction amongst political leaders, among whom Wilfrid Laurier and former Governor General Grey both admitted that they had suffered a similar breakdown. Grey was, in fact, a patient of Dr. Weir Mitchell in Philadelphia. Several years later, Walter Murray, President of the University of Saskatchewan, also had to leave his post for rest and recuperation from a breakdown. Like Scott, Murray suffered from insomnia and nervous tension. They both found that the sea air and rest were the cures they needed.

Throughout Scott's troubled times, his old friend, Jim Ross was watching over his political future. With Scott away again during the cold winter months of 1911-12, Ross wrote to Calder: "You ought to write [to Walter Scott] telling him that things are in good shape and how delighted people are to know that he is away during this very cold winter — and how much he will be required next summer. He mustn't get the idea that he is entirely out of it. I feel satisfied that another year will put him on his feet again." The next provincial election was looming and the Liberal planners wanted to have Scott back to lead them in the campaign.

By early April 1912, Scott consulted with Dr. Weir Mitchell of Philadelphia, one of the foremost neurologists of the time, and underwent the clinical treatment of rest, diet, and massage for four months at the Mitchell clinic. Scott was desperate to try any solution in order to bring an end to his depression. He tried the sea air, horseback riding, and even bought a horse which he housed in a shed behind his house

SAB R-A6008

Like others suffering from periods of depression, Scott took up horseback riding as a form of therapy.

in Regina. He also played golf, a new sporting phenomenon sweeping the continent. Scott showed some signs of improvement during the summer months: "I am very well, and for the fact golf and the horse I am sure are largely responsible. These are the medicines I now recommend."

Scott wrote that Dr. Mitchell had told him that if he wanted to recover his "share of nervous energy," he would have to rest and avoid nervous strain for several years. His doctors advised Scott that he should have only light political duty for two or three years in order to achieve a complete recovery. Scott wrote to Laurier that "nervous breakdown is a condition much easier to get into than to get away from." He described Mitchell as the "most noted nerve specialist in America. ... To him [Mitchell] and an assistant Mr. A.S. Pennington I owe my recovery." Though Mitchell opposed Scott's leaving the clinic and his return to the stressful occupation of politics, Scott returned to the province just in time to launch his third provincial election campaign as premier. Scott believed that he was regaining his self-confidence in public speaking and that he could hold himself together during the campaign.

Ill health and election campaigns were not the only things on Scott's mind during the summer of 1912. A major cyclone hit Regina during that summer, which created a sense of sadness for the whole family. Although their house was in the path of the cyclone and was badly damaged, Walter, Jessie and Dorothy were not injured. Unfortunately, Walter Scott's sister-in-law, Laura McDonald, was killed in the storm. Living in Saskatchewan meant more than having to cope with political storms; nature could also distribute its share of trouble and heartache.

During the spring and summer of 1912, the Liberals knew that time for another provincial general election was approaching. Jim Ross reported to Scott that as another election was on the horizon, "Mr. Calder apparently has the full confidence of the Party and also the House." By June, Scott was still at the Mitchell clinic for rest, massage and relaxation while Calder was at home leading the government. Yet, Scott was finding that he could no longer fulfill his usual commitments. One of the rites of political life for any politician is to meet with his constituents and seek renomination. In the spring of 1912, Scott was unable to meet with his constituents in Swift Current to seek the very important renomination. Notwithstanding his absence, the Liberal party nominated him by acclamation to stand as their candidate in the Swift Current riding for the next election. But Scott missed more than his nomination convention. He also missed the 1912 session of the Legislature, which was particularly significant because this marked the first time that the Legislative Assembly had met in its new chamber, one that Scott had planned with such care and attention. His forced absence must have been troubling to him.

As acting premier, Calder kept Scott posted as to happenings in the province. Both men knew they were in the lead-up to another election. In his letters to Scott, Calder was on the one hand reassuring, but he also showed some signs of anxiety about Scott's absence. He wrote: "We simply can't do without you — so get fixed up." By late April, Calder wrote to Scott wanting to know if he was coming back to the province. Calder was confident that the Liberals could win another election but wanted the assurance that his leader would be back in time for the campaign. The party needed Scott. Archie McNab, a Liberal MLA, wrote to Scott that an election was planned for late June 1912: "so hope you will take good care of yourself as we can worry through the session without you but hope your health will be so that you will be able to give us plenty of help during the election."

By early June, one month before the election, Scott returned to Regina to fight in the campaign, writing: "I am by no means as well as I should like to be but feel that I am quite well enough to give my friend Haultain just one more defeat." Scott admitted in various letters to friends that he had been away a lot and was not up to speed on all of the details. He hoped that, by the end of 1912, he would be fully recovered.

Scott returned for the election campaign but made fewer appearances on the campaign trail than had been his practice in the past four elections. He was home to wave the flag for his party and his record, but his health did not allow him to give his usual energetic, campaign-style tour of the province. In his manifesto to the Saskatchewan voters before the election, Scott declared that his health had been poor due to "overwork" and that he had been "temporarily absent." But he promised that, if the people renewed their faith in him and if his government was re-elected, he would continue to devote his "best energies to the cause of good government for Saskatchewan." The Scott Liberals scored the largest electoral victory on record, winning forty-four out of the fifty-two constituencies.

The *Morning Leader* was overjoyed at Scott's return, reporting that he was in "great form" and showed "a familiarity with the details of last spring's session." The

paper denied rumours, spread by the Conservative press, that Scott had been in an "insane asylum" in the United States. Whether the newspaper was denying the insane part or the fact that Mitchell's clinic was not technically an asylum is hard to determine, since it is very unlikely that the paper did not know that Scott was in Mitchell's clinic.

Scott had found the campaign very difficult, later reporting to a Dr. Pennington, one of Dr. Mitchell's colleagues, that he had spoken at only seven or eight meetings, that the task of electioneering was a "great deal harder than anybody except I myself realized." No one knew his inner turmoil at having to stand in front of a group of people in crowded quarters and give the expected spirited speech. However, he had returned to give his best effort for his party and his province.

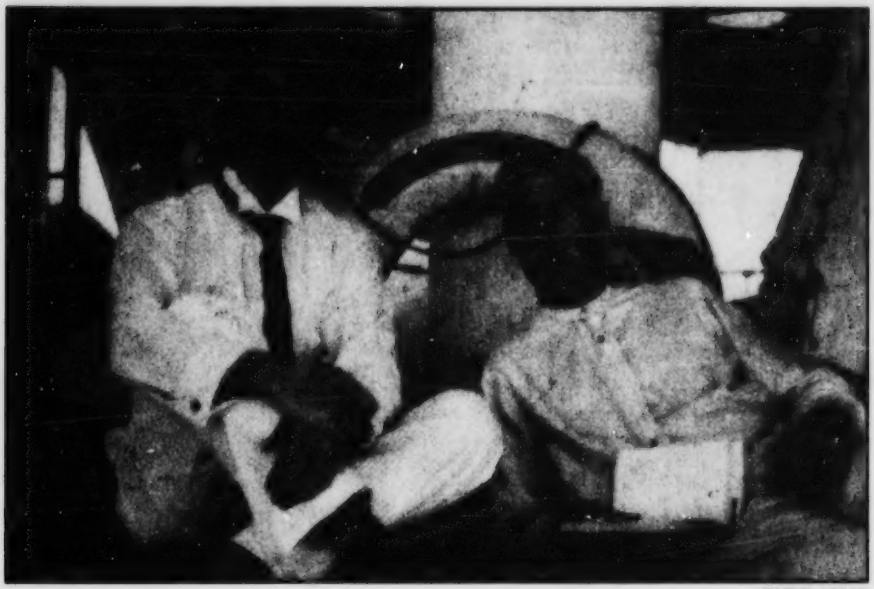
SAB R-A12113

Walter Scott with William M. Martin (left) standing in front of the Empress Hotel at the end of day's campaigning during the 1912 election. Despite assurances to friends that his health was stable, Scott is looking gaunt and tired.

The people of the province rewarded the government with a landslide electoral victory. Even though the federal Liberals had been defeated in 1911, Saskatchewan had voted Liberal. Scott capitalized on this support for reciprocity by making it a theme of the 1912 provincial election campaign and the primary reason for the subsequent electoral victory. Scott also believed that the provincial Liberal government had provided the people "reasonably efficient and clean administration," giving full credit to the members on his team for tending to their political fences and working hard as MLAs. Credit also went to Calder for his election strategy and attention to detail.

There was a difference, however, between the 1905 and 1912 elections. When Scott had been elected in 1905, he spent weeks sending out hundreds of personalized letters to supporters and workers, thanking them for their efforts in the campaign. In 1912, Scott was ill and left the province shortly after the election campaign, leaving J.W. McLeod, his private secretary, to write the letters of thanks. While each of Scott's letters in 1905 had a personal greeting, McLeod's letters were routine and administrative. The personal hand of Walter Scott was missed by the party faithful.

The 1912 election campaign showed the importance Scott placed on having a



SAB R-A6017

Walter Scott and his brother-in-law, J.M. Young, during their 1912 sea voyage to Europe.

record of clean government, but within four years this goal would be shattered by charges of scandal. Nonetheless, in 1912 the Scott government was returned with a larger majority than ever before, the size of which caused Scott to worry:

> It is not a bad thing for a party to have a fairly vigorous and watchful opposition. When there is to be a fight fought from the outside there is less danger of members of the household indulging in little spats amongst themselves.

As it would turn out, by 1916 the small eight-member opposition caused so much trouble for Scott that the government was nearly toppled.

Within a week after the election, Scott left the province for Europe, realizing that he had returned to duty too soon and that he needed more time to recover. The newspapers reported that he went to Germany to review German agricultural credit systems. This was to be an official absence. Unofficially, Scott travelled with his brother- in-law, J.M. Young, to various countries in Europe including Germany and Russia, seeking relief from his mental anguish and a rest from the strain of office. No doubt, he reviewed the German credit system while he was there, but he had another motive for his trip: he was travelling the world looking for improved health.

Scott's illness continued into 1913. When he was in the midst of his depression, he described it as a "sense of impending calamity all the time," a feeling of exceeding nervousness with the constant sense of impending doom, and a black cloud over his shoulder. While he continued to travel, particularly ocean voyages, in search of a reprieve from his affliction, the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan was fighting off the image that its leader had psychiatric problems. The 1914 *Canadian*

Annual Review, for example, wanted to show the amount of time that Jim Calder had served as acting premier during the year. Calder wrote to the publisher, J. Castell Hopkins, advising him that the government had no objections to having him shown as the acting premier but that he was reluctant to give any dates. The Liberals did not want special attention drawn to the amount of time that Scott had been away.

Scott admitted to supporters that he found being premier difficult and that he could not find any peace as long as he was in the province. The many problems needing attention and the people seeking appointments were always there; he always felt on duty. He claimed that he did not have enough money to travel and thus had to remain in Saskatchewan to do his duty, yet in that year Scott travelled to Nassau, Panama, Cuba, New York, San Francisco, Toronto and Ottawa, spending only one week in August 1915 in his constituency. The urge to travel was more powerful and necessary than his obligation to stay at home to manage the province. Scott had to minimize, to his supporters, the amount of time that he was away. Some would understand his predicament but most would not.

The telegrams and letters exchanged between Scott and Calder show they had an open and honest communication. While Calder was acting premier, he tried to keep Scott informed on all of the important developments. Even toward the end of Scott's premiership, when he was away more than half of each year, Calder did not show impatience with Scott's travels, nor did he indicate that he would like to assume the premier's chair permanently. For example, Calder asked the Saskatchewan Cooperative Abattoir and Cold Storage Association to wait with its problems until Scott was back in Regina. When the main telephone exchange for the province burned down, Calder, the minister responsible for telephones, conferred with Scott for possible solutions. When opposition members charged the government with corruption in 1915 and early 1916, Calder conferred regularly with Scott as to what the government's reaction would be. Calder accepted Scott's need to travel and seemed to be content to stay at home and look after the day-to-day administration. He was not ambitious but knew that the Liberal government depended on Scott's flair with the public and his close relationship with the people of the province. Liberals offered Calder the premiership when Scott finally did resign, but he refused.

W.R. Motherwell, Scott's faithful minister of Agriculture, continued to be supportive, admiring Scott's ability in the House to cut down the arguments of his political opponents. Motherwell wrote that when Scott followed Haultain in debate, Scott "simply did not leave the proverbial 'spot' on the floor even, where Haultain had formerly stood."

Even though Scott had a strong and loyal Cabinet, his own internal turmoil plagued him. He consulted with Dr. Charles D. Aaron of Detroit who prescribed Regulin, which, according to *Squire's Companion to the Latest Edition of the British Pharmacopoeia* for 1916, was made of agar-agar, a common laxative. Dr. Aaron believed that the laxative, which would clean the body of wastes and would help clear the mind, taken with a nerve tonic, would cure depression. Along with Regulin, Dr. Aaron also prescribed Peristaltine, another laxative.

What then was the cause of Scott's depression that affected his life so completely? In discussing a person's behaviour, it becomes a debate of "nature verses nurture." It is true that there was a genetic component to Scott's depression. The medical records at the London Hospital reveal that Walter Scott's maternal aunt, Bessie Telfer, and a maternal uncle, suffered from mental illness. Bessie Telfer was hospitalized in London for some time with depression. It is, therefore, possible that Scott inherited a genetic disposition toward depression.

The reason given by Scott for his mental state was overwork, a common Edwardian explanation for a state of exhaustion or "breakdown." Scott also argued that he had to prepare more and work harder to compete with educated men such as Haultain, who could present a speech with little apparent preparation. It was as if Scott had to compensate for his lack of education.

One explanation that has been suggested for why Scott was seemingly driven to succeed is the so-called "Phaeton Syndrome," the complex of the abandoned child. According to Greek mythology, Phaeton was the abandoned son of Phoebus, the driver of the sun chariot and Clymene, a sea nymph. When Phaeton finally found his father, Phoebus, he tried to impress him by driving the sun chariot. The horses, knowing that they had an inexperienced driver, bolted, and the sun chariot crashed to earth, killing Phaeton. Psychologists have argued that the point of this story was that an illegitimate child did not go through the Oedipus complex and therefore did not have "normal" development. In order to compensate for the insecurity created by growing up without a father, the child had to do daring stunts to impress others and to win recognition. According to psychologists, individuals suffering from the Phaeton Syndrome experience depression, particularly if the lost parent is of the same sex as the child. Remarriage of the remaining parent with the resulting presence of a stepfather and half-brothers and sisters tends to cause increased stress: "There is evidence... that childhood bereavement by loss of a father is a factor in adult depressive illness."[8]

When Lucille Ironmonger applied the Phaeton Syndrome to a study of the prime ministers of Britain between 1700 and 1900, she found that 67% of the these men had lost one parent in childhood or were illegitimate. She argued that, because of this childhood bereavement, the child pushed harder than average to achieve and to impress others, thus ending up as the prime minister. Luck played a part in their achieving this station in life, but they rose to the top out of choice. They often feigned resistance to becoming prime minister but she argues that this was bluff:

> the great game of politics has many elements in common with the other great game, poker, and its players are not seldom consummate masters of bluff. ... the Phaeton Syndrome impels men of ability and character to supreme achievement in many diverse fields, from politics to the arts.[9]

Like Phaeton, these men strove harder than their peers to excel and thus took high risks to get ahead. In taking such risks, they set themselves up for a fiery crash.

It is remarkable how Scott's career fits the pattern of the British study. He was illegitimate, and at an early age went West to make his mark in the world. Even though he feigned resistance to becoming premier in 1905, it was part of his plan

to lead Saskatchewan. Scott's depression was a combination of genetics as well as psychological and social factors. He may have inherited some tendency toward depression but his early childhood was also a factor. As in the Greek myth, Scott followed high-risk behaviour and ultimately ended his political career with a crash.

There is a third possible explanation for Scott's depression. For the first six years of his premiership, Saskatchewan's economy had been buoyant. By 1911-12, the province experienced an economic crisis. This was at approximately the same time that Scott suffered more serious mental health problems. Could this have been coincidence or was his depression caused by economic worries for his province?

There are many causes of mental illness, and it is possible that there was a connection between the economy and Scott's mental health, but based on a detailed examination of his correspondence, this theory does not seem plausible. Scott's health had been deteriorating since 1906-07. He experienced depression in good and bad economic times. In his letters, he did not express specific worries about the economy or draw a link between the economy and his health. The genetic theory and/or the Phaeton Syndrome are more likely explanations of the state of his health.

As proof of Scott's world travel, his personal address book contained a list of some of the finest hotels in the world. He carried with him Jessie and Dorothy's measurements for dresses and hose, thoughtfully bringing gifts home for his wife and daughter. Scott's periods of depression, with his sense of doom, at first lasting several months, usually occurred during the winter, when a two-to-three month vacation in a southern warm climate brought relief. When in a period of gloom, Scott was unable to write or to work. When he was in a manic phase, his work habits went to the other extreme and he was able to work long hours, accomplishing a year's work in six months. Scott had the ability to pull together a strong team to offer him support. With people like Calder, Motherwell and Turgeon in Cabinet, the machinery of government continued effectively while he was away.

On the other hand, Scott's mental illness disrupted his interpersonal relationships. He frequently had long-term disagreements with old friends, which usually led to the end of those friendships, as happened with Davin, Haultain, McInnis, Sifton, and ultimately Jim Calder. The three close friends who stuck with Scott throughout his life were his wife, Jessie, Jim Ross, and W.R. Motherwell. Being married to Walter Scott, with the pressures of his political life and with his state of health, must not have been easy. Even though Walter and Jessie Scott were married for forty-two years, they experienced many trying times. For three Christmases from 1918 to 1920, the Scotts were not together. Even for families that experience long periods of separation due to work or illness, it seems common for couples of the Christian faith to be together for Christmas. When Scott was away for long periods of time, Jessie would write him, addressing the letters as "My Darling Daddy" and signing off with "Mother." When Walter was depressed, he was not communicative with his wife, though Jessie would plead with him for attention and for his

love. Wanting very much to please him, she would frequently, in her letters, apologize for something she had done and plead for forgiveness. While Walter was away in July 1911, she wrote, "do like me when you get back." She would sign off her letters with, "Keep well and come home to the old girl that love [*sic*] you so much."

Their adopted daughter, Dorothy, tried to keep her parents close to each other. When Walter and Jessie were apart, she would remind her father to write to her mother: "I think you might write to mother because you know how sensitive she is and when you don't write she thinks you don't care." Jessie wrote on one occasion when she was wondering if their marriage was over:

> Daddy dear do you think we will get acquainted again when I get home. Really Daddy I am not so bad if you really know me, inside the outside is rather bad at times but that is not me.

Jessie did want the marriage to continue: "I would like to mean a lot to you for I do like you so much."

There were other pressures in the marriage, as revealed in the caring letters Scott wrote to two other women, now contained in archives of his personal correspondence. Ida Goodall and Walter Scott met while on a cruise to Norway in 1911, and Goodall later reminisced about the "pleasant times and events we enjoyed." There are few copies of letters that Scott wrote to Goodall but judging from her letters to him, they corresponded frequently. They saw each other from time to time in New York, where she lived, and Los Angeles, where she also maintained a residence. In one letter she wrote to Walter that she was "in eager anticipation of seeing you."

The other woman who wrote frequently to Scott was Doris Fellows, a New York actress. The few copies of letters to Fellows that Scott kept open with "My Dear Doris," and conclude with: "I often think of you, and that [*sic*] I appreciate your letters." Fellows travelled to various cities with her work, and on one occasion wrote to Scott hoping that they would be able to meet in Winnipeg. She concluded her letters with "I would like so much to see you."

The level of intimacy and emotion in the letters to Goodall and Fellows showed a different type of relationship from that with other people with whom Scott corresponded on a regular basis. Fellows, for example, wrote to him at the Assiniboia Club rather than to his home or office. In one letter, she said that she had sent a Christmas card to his home but received no reply, suggesting that Scott was discouraging her from sending letters to his home. On another occasion, Fellows did not want to phone Mrs. Scott for Walter's address while he was travelling, and instead asked a male friend to make the call.

In the correspondence with both Goodall and Fellows, there is no mention of Jessie or Dorothy, suggesting that Goodall and Fellows were not family friends but rather Walter's close intimates. There is no evidence to indicate exactly how intimate these two relationships were but, judging from the correspondence, when Scott travelled to Los Angeles and New York, he made a point of visiting with each of them. Whether Walter's family knew of these liaisons is not certain. Dorothy wrote to her father on one occasion urging him to watch out for "that Bartlett woman" in New York, but with no letters in the files between the "Bartlett woman"

and Scott, there is no indication of who she was. Dorothy, who seemed to be concerned about her father seeing other women, concluded her warning to her father with the note: "you know my feelings in that direction."

Notwithstanding the strains on the marriage, Jessie and Walter Scott stayed together as a married couple until Jessie's death in 1932. She suffered from her own bouts of depression and found it difficult to sleep when she was alone, missing Walter greatly when he was away. When Jessie died, Walter missed her and wrote to friends that his closest friend throughout his life was Jessie. Throughout it all, they had maintained their relationship.

Throughout his illness, Walter Scott was able to maintain his sense of humour, often including in his letters a cheerful word of encouragement for a colleague or sharing a joke. His turn of phrase, for a man with minimal schooling, was remarkable. In a letter to a friend, for example, he described a poker game which lasted beyond 2 a.m. as a "nine handed prayer meeting." Continuing the religious analogy, he wrote that it must have been a "Union service, with some RC's [Roman Catholics] taking part, because I observed a woman's face amongst the pictures; and as you know, we Presbyterians have no Queen to match the King in our creed." No matter how hard life became, Scott usually maintained a sense of optimism, in times of trouble reminding himself that "the blacker the night the brighter the dawn." In working with people who resisted change, Scott wrote, "The kettle never boils without the contents undergoing change." True to his Presbyterian heritage, Scott had a strong work ethic. In writing to his nephew in San Francisco, Scott praised him for his hard work:

> The only real contentment we can obtain in this world is the contentment that comes from the realization of work resolutely confronted and honestly done. Amusements do not bring contentment.

The extensive trips that Scott took in search of good health meant, however, that during his premiership he was out of the office and the province for more than half the time. An analysis of his extensive correspondence with friends while he travelled provides an estimate of the accumulated time away from home. By his own admission, from December 1905 to August 1908, during the first Legislature, he was away eighteen months. In 1906, he took a six-month Caribbean cruise and a tour of southern United States. In December 1907, he left for a three-month Mediterranean cruise. He went to Jamaica in February 1909, and made another visit to Europe and took a Mediterranean cruise of ten weeks in March 1910. He was away for six months in 1911 in Victoria, London and Norway, and visited Florida, Nassau, and the Bahamas in January 1912. He travelled to Philadelphia for four months in the spring of 1912 until the provincial election campaign, but left for Europe immediately after the election. In 1913, he made an around-the-world tour of approximately nine months. He wrote that from February to November 1913, he had travelled 50,000 miles. January 1914 found him in Australia and Hawaii and home by June 27, a voyage of approximately five months. In all, from September 1905 until his retirement in October 1916, Walter Scott spent more

than half of his time away from the province. To stave off depression, he travelled from country to country and from city to city at a frenetic pace. It is true that at many of his stopovers, he met with government officials, but for the most part, his travels were for sightseeing, and a cure and avoidance of depression.

Notwithstanding Scott's internal turmoil and pain, rumours continued to circulate that he was going to return to federal politics and possibly to Laurier's Cabinet. The 1908 *Canadian Annual Review* reported that, after Scott met with various federal politicians in Regina, word spread that he would enter the Laurier Cabinet, but nothing came of this speculation. Two years later, the *Review* again noted that Scott was going to go into the Laurier Cabinet to replace Frank Oliver as minister of the Interior. The following year, the *Review* predicted that, if Laurier had won the 1911 election, Scott would have become the minister of the Interior and Calder would have become the premier. Scott no doubt heard these rumours with some interest, but publicly claimed that he had every intention, if the people of the province were willing, to stay on as their premier. Yet the stories continued. The *Leader* reprinted an article from the London *Times* which predicted that the next prime minister would be from the West, possibly Walter Scott. W.M. Martin, a Saskatchewan Liberal MP, also heard rumours of Scott's return to federal politics. Even two years after his resignation as premier, J.W. McLeod was still hoping that Scott would become the next Liberal leader after Wilfrid Laurier.

Instead of revelling in this praise, Scott was more interested in securing his own succession in Saskatchewan. He wrote W.M. Martin that he could be his (Scott's) successor:

> You have excellent equipment in the way of education, the lack of which will always be a serious handicap to me, and you are showing ability to inspire confidence both in a private and public way which is essential to success in public life.

A year later, Scott renewed this offer to Martin:

> I have had an idea in the back of my head that some day it would be mutually advantageous to you and me for you to leave Ottawa and come into our House.

Martin replied that he was less interested in coming into provincial politics than in earning some money.

By the time of Laurier's last illness (he died on February 17, 1919), Scott knew that his time for returning to federal politics had passed. Whether he had ever seriously considered running for the office of prime minister is open to speculation. As time passed and Scott's health continued to deteriorate, he probably knew that he would not be able to carry the load, and by the time the position of Liberal leader was open, Scott's era was over. The torch would pass to someone else.

Chapter 8
"The Old Order Changeth"

[1912-1916]

SAB R-B10109

An early cartoon supporting temperance, c. 1915

I will be glad when the day comes that he [Walter] will be out of politics. We may not have so much money to spend and not go so much but for myself I would not care and I really think both Walter and Dorothy would be better off if they did not go so much.

— Jessie Scott, May 1, 1916

During Scott's last months as premier, five important topics confronted him: World War I, the social reforms that arose from the war, the Bradshaw charges of corruption, the controversy over Reverend MacKinnon, and his own deteriorating health. These were times of change for the premier and the province but, with his depression, Scott and the Liberal Party realized that his term in office was coming to an end.

Notwithstanding Scott's lengthy absences due to ill health, he and his government introduced a heavy legislative load in the Third Legislature (1912-16). In the First Session (November 14, 1912-January 11, 1913), the Legislative Assembly passed seventy-three Bills pertaining to education (School Act, School Assessment Act, and School Grants Act), rural telephones, rural municipalities and local improvement districts, guarantees for railway construction and the ratification of the Co-operative Elevator Company agreement. As minister of Education, Scott piloted the school Bills through the Legislature.

The Second Session of the Third Legislature (November 6-December 19, 1913) passed ninety-seven Bills with Scott introducing twelve, his busiest session as premier. The Legislative Assembly considered agricultural issues, including the success with the Co-operative elevators and hail insurance. MLAs received reports on the lack of progress on the negotiations over Crown lands and debated further amendments to the School Act.

The outbreak of World War I necessitated a short third session. The Assembly passed twenty-two Bills to help the citizens through the war and to determine Saskatchewan's contribution to the war effort. The Fourth Session of the Third Legislature (May 10-June 24, 1915), through Scott's introduction of seven Bills concerning the sale of alcohol and the School Act, concentrated on education and the closure of Saskatchewan's bars and the sale of alcohol through government liquor board stores.

During the Fifth Session (January 18-March 14, 1916), which was Scott's last as premier, the Legislative Assembly passed forty-six Bills; this Session was overshadowed by the issue of female suffrage and the Bradshaw charges. Scott's three Bills again concentrated on the School Act. In all, the Legislative Assembly passed on average forty-eight Bills each session, with Scott piloting slightly fewer than six Bills per session. As premier and minister of Education, he concentrated his efforts on the School Act amendments.

With the declaration of war in Europe in August 1914, radical change, both economic and social, came to Canada, including the Prairies. Old boundaries of

social thought came crashing down. War tested the beliefs that people had held for generations but, for many, strengthened the ties that bound the British Empire together. On the first day of the war, Scott's instinct was to call for calm and to quiet the racial divisions that the war was bound to create. In a speech on August 4, 1914, Walter Scott asked the people of Saskatchewan "to be careful in making comments that might be offensive to citizens of the various countries involved." Scott's government drew its electoral strength from the immigrant settlers in the province, the largest groups being of German and Ukrainian background. Germany and Austria-Hungary were the enemies of the British Empire, but Scott was careful not to alienate German and Austro-Hungarian voters. He was anxious to ensure that they would remain loyal to the Canadian government and, by implication, the British Empire.

Scott had sympathy for the new settlers who felt a pull to their homeland and yet exhibited a new sense of loyalty to their adopted country, Canada:

> I know that they [German Canadians] are loyal to the British cause which is their own cause in this new land, but I know also that the better men and women they are the more must their hearts be torn by the present terrible state of affairs. I wish to say that the fortitude they are displaying in their trying position is deserving of all praise, and will not be forgotten when their awful troubles are ended.

Throughout the war, Scott urged a calm voice in dealing with the immigrant population. When the Post Office threatened to withhold the delivery of German-language newspapers, Scott argued that, since the German and Austro-Hungarian settlers were peaceable, the action was unnecessary. Scott realized that the settlers clearly wanted to know about events in their homelands and he wanted to ensure that they still felt welcome in Canada.

Scott had always been a proud supporter of British ties and flag, as he showed when he wrote: "the flying of the Union Jack over the schools should be helpful towards recognition of what the flag represents and towards inculcating a pride in it and in British citizenship." For Scott and others, the war would draw into question the true meaning of that flag.

On war itself, Scott soon became a supporter of the war effort. To a mother with a son overseas, he wrote:

> It is a sad and terrible time for everybody but on the other hand you have every right to feel a joy and pride in the fact that you have a boy bearing arms and doing his part to uphold the great cause of universal liberty and fighting in behalf of the Flag under which we have always lived and of which we are so justly proud.

For Scott, "when England is at war, Canada is at war." His loyalty to the British cause was unwavering. War was a difficult time, however, for many Presbyterians who had been pacifists. A colleague of Scott's and a Presbyterian leader in the province, Dr. E.H. Oliver, believed that if a country had to be at war, at least the church could offer leadership in humanizing the battle:

> it was the Church that did seek to check its [war's] ravages by humanizing its methods, by chivalry, by the truce of God, by the Red Cross, and by endeavouring to link it only to righteous causes.[1]

Scott did not try to justify the war with such lofty goals. Since Canada was part of the British Empire, under the Union Jack, there was an obligation to fight to defend British values and political institutions.

The Legislative Assembly met in wartime session to debate the situation, and Scott praised the British institutions. In support of the war effort, the government of Saskatchewan donated 1,500 horses as an initial contribution to Canada's allies. A threat to Saskatchewan's agricultural workforce appeared when men began to leave the farms to join their comrades in the fields of France. But it was generally believed that the war would be short, and that the world would soon return to normal. Scott made a personal contribution to the war effort, offering all employees at the *Moose Jaw Times* leave with pay to go to fight. Because the threat to Britain was so serious, he felt that everyone should be willing to make a contribution.

World War I brought mixed emotions and economic results to western Canada. With the increased need for manufactured goods for the war effort, westerners expected that the West would be able to diversify its economy and become a manufacturing as well as an agricultural region. Historian John Herd Thompson argues that the reverse happened, that rather than increased manufacturing in the West, this region became even more dependent on agriculture and particularly on wheat.[2]

As the war in Europe continued, more men went to fight, thus creating a labour shortage for western farmers:

> In rural areas, farmers raised wages and pleaded for harvest leave so that soldiers could help in the fields. By 1916, the labour shortage was so acute that most interned aliens were released.[3]

Canada lacked both men and horses at the battlefront and at home, creating a dilemma for governments. How could the nation best serve the war effort? Prices for wheat were up but the farmers could not bring the crops off the fields without the men and horses. Without the high production of wheat, the war machine in Europe would starve. J.H. Thompson noted that the gasoline tractor was coming onto the market but farmers were reluctant to convert from horse power to tractors: "There simply were no suitable light tractors available at prices farmers were willing to pay."[4]

In addition to the economic effects, the war brought increased pressure for social change whereby the government had to become more involved in public policy, for example, bringing reform in such areas as prohibition and female franchise.[5] The reform movement that pushed for tariff reduction, prohibition, direct legislation, and women's suffrage had begun at the turn of the century but had experienced little success before the war. With the soldiers fighting and dying overseas in defence of liberty and democracy, there was a change of attitude regarding the role of the state within society, which the reform movement used to promote prohibition and women's suffrage.

Prohibitionists argued that alcohol should be banned to protect the morals of the soldiers and to conserve grain for food in the war effort. Drunkenness, they said, weakened the drive to defeat the Kaiser. It was a general perception that immigrants drank more alcohol than those born in Canada, so prohibitionists urged immigrants to show their loyalty to Canada by voting "dry."

As for the struggle to win the vote for women, the suffragists argued that women wanted the liberties and freedoms that their husbands, sons, and fathers were fighting for in Europe. If women could achieve the vote, they would be able to prevent the "going back" on social reform when the war ended.

Even though the temperance movement had long been pressuring the government to limit, and finally eliminate, the sale of alcoholic beverages in the province, the war brought a coalescing of the public will and new pressure on the government to bring change. Scott had long been a supporter of prohibition, writing as early as 1905:

> I cannot say that I look with favour upon the licensing system at all. I should very much like to bring about the adoption of a system which would eradicate the bar ... while I am not a pledged abstainer I do not use intoxicating liquor in any form.

Scott knew that the government had to be very careful not to get too far ahead of the public will on the sale and consumption of alcohol or it would create the danger of a backlash against methods of liquor control. Scott planned to have the "ban the bar" lobby push the government to implement legislation. He was clearly aware of the counter-pressure coming from the "Licensed Victuallers" to keep the bars open. Without a great public surge of popular support to close the bars, Scott was not prepared to go out on a limb. On the other hand, he was unwilling to hire anyone who had a problem with alcohol as a government employee; once the "enemy was subdued," the person could consider applying for a government job.

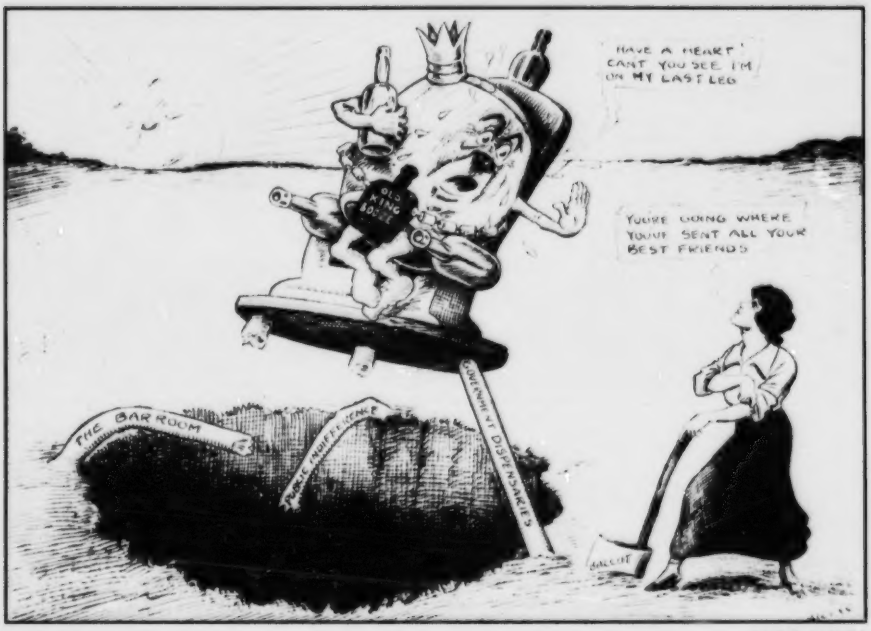
Scott knew the anti-alcohol lobby would not provide stable support for the government, and that if the bars were closed, bar owners, liquor interests, and many foreign immigrants would vote against the government. Likewise, Scott knew that he could not count on the prohibitionists for their support after the bars were closed:

> Putting law on the statute book is only the beginning. Unless the moral reform forces are ready to take their clothes off and do something more practical than frame resolutions and have sermons given to help enforce the law, it would have been better not to pass the law.

To a colleague, Scott wrote: "the political party which depends on the so-called temperance people for support is sitting on a very shaky stool."

Scott was determined to wait with liquor legislation until he was certain that the majority of people wanted controls on the sale of alcohol. He knew, as well, that to close the bars would wreak havoc on the local hotel and bar owners. Any measure to close the bars would have to be done in the spring or summer and not in the winter, in order to cushion the impact of laying off employees. Scott withstood the criticism for not taking action until he felt the "time was right," but on March 18, 1915, at a meeting hosted by J.G. Turriff, a member of Parliament, in the town of Oxbow, Scott announced that the government would introduce legislation to close the bars as of July 1, 1915. He was able to keep the plan secret until the announcement, thus dropping a bombshell on both sides of the debate:

> I rather think the opposing element had its breath so completely taken away at first that the proposal got the advantage of a seemingly almost universal endorsation [*sic*], which is always a most valuable advantage for any political proposal.



SAB R-A19421

A political cartoon urging citizens of Saskatchewan to vote in favour of prohibition in the provincial referendum of December 11, 1916.

In the Speech from the Throne on May 10, 1915, the lieutenant-governor announced that the major initiative for the Session would be to terminate the bar licences as of June 30. The sale of "intoxicating liquors in bars and clubs" was harming the country's "strength in prosecuting the war." Instead of total prohibition, the government, however, had decided to open a system of publicly controlled liquor dispensaries, based on local option. Districts could vote on whether they wanted these dispensaries. In the same speech, the government announced that there would be a referendum no earlier than December 1916 on the question of closing or reopening the bars. The government did not opt for prohibition because the province did not have the authority to enforce it. The Speech from the Throne outlined one further measure. No earlier than 1919, the people of Saskatchewan could decide whether they wanted the dispensaries to continue. Scott made a bold announcement to close the bars and provided several opportunities for the people to decide to close the dispensaries at a future time. Yet, by May 1915, the government had not shown a commitment to go for full prohibition.

The 1915 *Canadian Annual Review* praised Scott and Calder on their political skills in announcing a wise program whereby they were able to hold conflicting interest groups together. A two-man commission, composed of Dr. E.H. Oliver and J.F. Bole, went to South Carolina to study the only publicly owned system of liquor dispensaries in North America. The commission recommended a similar system for Saskatchewan as a transitional step toward total prohibition.

The decision to close the bars was a result of the war, according to Scott, who wrote to Motherwell:

> It is becoming quite apparent, however, that one effect of the war is a marked strengthening of public opinion in favour of much greater restrictions against, or even the abolition of, the liquor business.

Motherwell strongly supported the government's stand on the liquor question. Scott called the measure "drastic" and a "war measure." Knowing the government would meet some opposition, he did not reach this decision easily:

> We decided on the policy in the full expectation that we were taking our lives in our hands and that we should have to meet determined and probably long-continued opposition.

Without the war, Scott wrote to a relative in Australia, the government would not have "taken the responsibility for such a measure." Aware that the war meant a dramatic shift in public opinion, Scott was determined to ride the wave of change:

> An extraordinary change in the sentiment and temper of the people has taken place in some respects, for one thing the sentiment against the liquor traffic has solidified and become focused in a quite remarkable way. The Saskatchewan Government have been feeling the force of the new opinion and we have decided to completely abolish the retail traffic within the Province.

In establishing the liquor board system, Scott was conscious that his government was interfering in what had been a private business, yet he believed that the government would lose control of the sale of alcohol if it was in private hands. Controls, administered by a public board, would ensure a system free from political interference, thus instilling public trust.

Even though it took the Scott government considerable time to come to the decision to abolish the bars, Scott was confident that he was on the right trail: "we made no mistake in the action which was taken in this sphere." He had some doubts, however, as to whether public support for prohibition would last:

> People are never quite unanimous on the liquor or temperance question but whether it is the result to a different feeling produced by the war or the fact that our solution of the question is somewhat different from the colutions [*sic*: solutions] generally proposed or some other reason we appear to be receiving the very enthusiastic approval and support for our solution of an overwhelming majority of the people.

Scott continued to worry that no matter how well the government administered the policy, public support would erode and it would be difficult to prevent illicit liquor sales. It is true that the war had created a "unique situation," but what would happen once the war was over?

Scott was convinced that he had reacted to the public will but was wary of any further shift in the majority position. To maintain public support meant that Scott had to keep his finger on the pulse of the province and not act too quickly. However, delay could also be costly if the government failed to stay just one step ahead of the majority of the people:

> The Government certainly has taken a risk, but on the other hand a situation had developed which compelled us to do something or lose hundreds of good supporters.

Scott wrote to a church leader, T. Albert Moore of Toronto, that total prohibition might not be too far off, but he first wanted to be assured that the people were in support of such a bold move. He predicted to the Reverend Bennett that the liquor board system would likely last a year or so. These letters were sent to churchmen who were in favour of total prohibition. Scott told them that while the government had gone as far as it could for the moment, it would go further when the time was right. Yet he expressed doubt to other supporters that the public attitude would stay "dry" for a long period of time.

The public reaction to Scott's policy was generally positive. A Mrs White praised Scott: "It seems to me you are a leader of men or you would not have succeeded in gaining a unanimous decision on such an important question." Scott received congratulations from all sides except, of course, from the liquor interests. He did not rule out the possibility of having to give credit protection to the hotel owners if necessary to compensate them for lost revenues. As it turned out, the government never gave this protection. Scott was convinced that his government's actions would stimulate a prohibition vote in Alberta but not in Saskatchewan where there was a "very heavy foreign population" which would not vote in favour of prohibition. Scott led his political team on a delicate balancing act. The foreign vote was a cornerstone of the Liberal government's support, yet Scott knew that the prohibition forces, particularly in wartime, had the power to sway the majority of the people into supporting prohibition. Prohibition and patriotism became synonymous. A successful party leader had to balance the competing forces and to form a compromise position that would be adaptable to change on short notice.

According to historian James Gray, the closing of the bars reduced provincial alcohol consumption by 90 percent.[6] But the prohibitionists did not ease the pressure on the government with the closing of the bars. They wanted to eliminate all consumption of alcohol. On December 13, 1915, seven districts, by means of a plebiscite, opted to close their liquor stores.

In the Speech from the Throne on January 18, 1916, one short paragraph was devoted to the alcohol question. The government claimed that the effect of closing the bars was positive. Several "minor" amendments to the Liquor Act were promised for the coming session. Scott himself was occupied with Education Act amendments and left the Liquor Act amendments to Jim Calder.

It was not until December 11, 1916, several months after Scott's resignation, that the province voted overwhelmingly to close the liquor stores. Even though Scott had not expressed a strong belief that prohibition would work or would last after the end of the war, it is likely that, if he had still been premier in December 1916, he would have bowed to public pressure and closed all provincial liquor outlets. As experience would show, Scott was correct. Prohibition was hard to enforce and did not last long after the end of the war.

World War I brought more social change to the prairie landscape: female suffrage. Women in Britain had led the way in pushing for the vote, but it had been a long uphill battle. Pressure for granting the franchise to women in Saskatchewan was

SAB R-A369(2)

"The Door Steadily Opens." A political cartoon from 1910, favouring female suffrage.

evident before the war. In February 1912 and 1913, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, at its annual meetings, passed resolutions in favour of giving the vote to women. In December 1912, J.E. Bradshaw, Conservative MLA for Prince Albert, moved a resolution in favour of female suffrage without creating the firestorm he had expected.[7] Members of the government spoke in favour of the motion and the resolution passed unanimously. Even though the Legislature adopted the motion, Scott did not take action on this measure, waiting instead for a groundswell of public support.

Scott held traditional views about women. In hearing that a woman in the community had just delivered triplets, for example, he wrote in offering congratulations: "I may, however, speaking for the Government, venture to express the hope that other good ladies in the Province will take note of the event in your district and go and do likewise." Scott never missed a chance to encourage the growth of the province's population, but in so doing he left the impression that women were primarily there for the reproduction of the human race. On the other hand, Scott did not oppose women in their struggle to gain the vote and property rights. For example, the Scott government proposed legislation to ensure a woman's right to control the sale of homestead property and the Act passed on June 24, 1915.

Scott's support of female suffrage was clear in correspondence long before the war, as indicated in a letter of August 1910:

> Personally I have always held the view that just as soon as a majority of women desire to exercise the franchise they should be granted the right by law. I have never given the subject serious study and I should at present prefer not to commit myself publicly on the question.

SPEAK!
VOTES FOR WOMEN
At the last session of the Saskatchewan Legislature Premier Scott expressed himself as in favor of extending the franchise to women, but did not care to enact the necessary legislation until the women of Saskatchewan asked for it. It is now up to the women to "SPEAK" in clear and unmistakable terms.

SAB B8493

On February 26, 1913, this cartoon appeared in the Grain Growers' Guide.

Scott repeated his stance that he favoured granting the vote once women could show the government that they wanted it. As in the closing of the bars, even though Scott personally favoured a measure, he was reluctant to move on the issue until he was convinced that the majority of the people were in favour. Throughout his eleven years as premier, he was the type of leader who would lead the people only when he was convinced that he knew where they wanted to go. Scott supported

female suffrage in principle but preferred to wait until he could gain partisan advantage. When the Legislature again passed a resolution in favour of female suffrage in December 1913, Scott said that he favoured the measure but did not think the time was "ripe" yet for women's suffrage. However, he openly encouraged women to take action, advising Mrs. Lawton, President of the Equal Suffrage Association, to keep pushing its campaign for suffrage. Scott offered advice to women on how to organize politically and how to collect the petitions needed to convince the government to move on extending the franchise. He was prepared to help them where he could to build a public movement in favour of female franchise, but he refused to introduce the necessary legislation unless they organized a strong public lobby.

On January 18, 1916, in the Speech from the Throne, there was a hint that the government was prepared to make a move on the franchise question. On February 14, with the galleries full of women who had come to Regina to present thousands of petitions, Scott rose in his place in the Chamber to announce that his government would introduce legislation to extend the vote to women.[8] To the President of the Women's Grain Growers' of Saskatchewan, he wrote:

> I was very pleased indeed to be in position to give a favorable reply to the delegation who presented the petition. The women of Saskatchewan have helped and are helping to build up this Province of which we are so justly proud and I am very glad indeed that it is my good fortune to occupy the position of Premier in a Legislature which is extending to our women, through the franchise, further and fuller powers of assistance and service in the development of Saskatchewan.

The Act to grant the franchise received Royal Assent on March 14, 1916.

For several reasons, the women of Saskatchewan gained the vote after a relatively short battle. To homestead on the prairie land and to make a success of farming, required work by both men and women, and their cooperative efforts built prairie society. Because men generally recognized the importance of this joint service to the land and the province, they supported the concept that women deserved the vote as well.[9] Scott was also aware that, by the end of 1915, the neighbouring prairie provinces were preparing to introduce legislation to grant the vote to women, and his pride in Saskatchewan as a socially progressive province prompted him to take action before they did. When Scott finally acted, he knew that "the time was ripe and the demand was broad."[10] Elizabeth Kalmakoff, on the other hand, argues that the Scott government had introduced this measure not to bring social change to the province but "simply because the optimum moment for doing so had arrived, the moment when the greatest possible credit would reflect upon the Liberal party."[11]

February 1916 was not only a positive time for the announcement on the extension of the vote to women, but also the beginning of a firestorm for the Scott government. Three days before Scott made his February 14 address to the women of the province, J.E. Bradshaw, Conservative MLA for Prince Albert, rose in the Chamber to announce that there was corruption in the Scott government, and that he had

evidence to show that members of the government had accepted bribes. He refused to name names or give any details, however, until the government agreed to establish a Royal Commission. If the government would not do this, the Opposition threatened to go to Lieutenant-Governor Richard S. Lake, a federal Conservative appointee, to ask him to establish a Royal Commission.[12]

On February 23, 1916, Jim Calder charged that Bradshaw was part of a plot hatched by the Honourable Robert Rogers, a federal Conservative Cabinet minister from Manitoba, who was intent on embarrassing the government. Since the government was afraid that the Conservative opposition would convince the lieutenant-governor to establish a commission on his own accord, Scott met with Lieutenant-Governor Lake on several occasions and received his assurance that Lake would consult the government before taking any action.

An editorial in the *Evening Province* accused the government of playing for time, charging that the delay in setting up a commission was a sign of the government's guilt. However, Scott argued that a legislative committee was the proper route whereas a commission would weaken the authority of the Legislative Assembly. It was a political issue within the purview of the Legislative Assembly.

In the midst of the crisis, Scott left for Montreal en route to Nassau, the Bahamas. From Montreal, he wrote a letter explaining why he left when he did: having expected the session to be over by that time, he had booked a ship to Nassau and he felt that he could not cancel his vacation. He was sure that matters of state were in good hands in Saskatchewan, reassuring his friend, Jim Ross, that Calder could handle it all in Regina. Even though his actions seemed reckless, Scott felt that it was a good tactic, one which would ease the pressure on the government when he was away, and Calder was a capable lieutenant. Throughout his political career, Scott had acted cautiously but progressively in providing to the province policy that had broad public support. In the final months of his premiership, and with illness affecting his judgement, Scott began to take political chances and alienate people whom he had taken pains to accommodate in the past.[13]

From a distance and by means of a series of telegrams, Scott and Calder planned the strategy to meet the Bradshaw charges. Scott advised Calder that they should establish a Royal Commission to "lay bear [*sic*] the whole unthinkably treacherous game." Scott had another motive in sending the telegrams. On March 1, 1916, he sent a copy of his Calder telegram to Stewart Lyon of the *Globe*, emphasizing that they were establishing a commission to get to the bottom of the affair. That he sent a copy of his telegram to the press indicates that Scott wanted to appear clean and untouched by the scandal and that he was doing everything in his power to clean it up.

Once the government announced that it would create Royal Commissions, Bradshaw revealed the information he had on the scandals. In the end, the government appointed three commissions. The first was chaired by Sir Frederick Haultain, former leader of the opposition, and comprised Judge Newlands and Judge Lamont (the first Attorney General of Saskatchewan). The government charged this commission with investigating allegations of graft in the construction of the Battleford asylum, the Regina jail and the Department of Telephones.

Judge Wetmore chaired a second commission to examine all road construction contracts from 1913 to 1916, and the construction of a bridge in Saskatoon. And finally, the government established the Brown Elwood commission which examined the charges made by J.E. Bradshaw concerning the acceptance of bribes by certain MLAs over liquor legislation. Since Scott was out of the province, he was not directly involved with the commission hearings. Even though the final result of the three commission reports cleared him and his Cabinet of any wrongdoing, several public servants and MLAs were found guilty of fraud and the acceptance of bribes.[14]

The political effect of having scandal among the Liberal members and the civil service could have been disastrous for Scott's government. Yet Scott and his Cabinet survived because they were seen by the public as having had the Bradshaw charges investigated fully, albeit unwillingly. The three independent Royal Commissions erased any hint of coverup and when those who were implicated were charged and tried, the government could argue that the charges were in the past and that it was time to move on to other issues. However, this was no time for Scott to breathe easily.

The culmination of another storm that had been brewing for the past three years came in 1916. The question of separate schools had been controversial since the creation of the province. In 1905, Scott had been satisfied with the autonomy bills which created Saskatchewan and Alberta, giving some protection to separate schools, which were administered like the public schools under one government system. Religious minorities had the right to have religious education for one half hour at the end of the school day but the curriculum, and the general administration of the school system was handled by the Department of Education. The school boards were very much involved in the day-to-day administration of the schools in their systems. The separate school supporters paid their taxes to help finance the separate schools, as did public school supporters for the public schools.[15] Believing that this system was "essentially a national school system," Scott fought the 1905 provincial general election on the autonomy bill issue and the people had elected him. Even though the schools issue was not prominent for the next eight years, it was always in the background. Neither side was totally happy with the solution.

On September 14, 1911, Judge McLorg issued a court decision concerning the Vonda school district which reopened the school debate. McLorg wrote: "the option of supporting the public or the separate school system rested with each individual ratepayer."[16] Taxpayers who were supporting the separate school system could switch their taxes over to the public system or vice versa. Afraid that ratepayers would exercise this choice and jeopardize the financial stability of some school boards, the government claimed that the ruling was against the constitution and the School Act.

On November 18, 1912, Scott, as minister of Education, introduced amendments to the School Act to restore the tax system as he believed it had been under the 1905 Act. Separate and public ratepayers would dedicate their taxes to their

respective school boards. Even though both political parties supported passage of the amendments, a political storm began to brew shortly thereafter. The Orange Order argued that religious minorities, particularly Roman Catholics, were given special treatment. The *Daily Standard* charged that Scott gave in to the Roman Catholics to repay them for their support in 1905, suggesting that he was paying allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. In late December 1912, the Reverend Murdock MacKinnon, Presbyterian minister of Knox Church in Regina, protested to Scott that the amendments gave too much power to the Roman Catholics. He argued that the amendments promoted the separate schools by forcing separate school ratepayers to dedicate their taxes to the separate school board. Given a choice, perhaps the separate school system supporters would direct their taxes toward the public system, thereby weakening the separate system. The Scott amendments brought greater financial security and thus new life to separate schools.

In the case of businesses, the government divided the taxes between the two systems even though there might not be any separate supporters associated with the business. MacKinnon argued in favour of free choice but in one direction only: this freedom should be there to allow Catholics to direct their taxes to the public system but not for Protestants to support the separate schools. MacKinnon and his followers believed that it was their mission to bring assimilation to the prairies so that the people would be English-speaking and Protestant.

Scott was liberal in his views, believing that assimilation would come over time as part of an evolutionary process. He felt a duty to protect the rights of the minority. The provincial Conservatives took up MacKinnon's point, arguing that Scott was harbouring foreigners and was an agent of the Catholic Church.

In writing to his old friend, J.W. Dafoe, Scott noted that "anything involving the term 'separate schools' is very easily used to stir people up because it is a subject which so easily arouses a latent prejudice." Scott continued to argue that the School Act amendments reaffirmed the law as it had been in 1905. Again, the Liberal government was performing a balancing act. Relying on the support of new immigrants, many of whom were Roman Catholic, the government had to protect the rights of this minority.

Most French Canadians in Saskatchewan and many Germans were Roman Catholics. As a result, the separate schools often had children who spoke a language other than English, so the question of schools involved not only religion but language as well. W.R. Motherwell, who favoured English in the schools but was critical of any plan to force people to speak English, reflected Scott's liberal views on this issue:

> English, by all means, should be the language of our schools but just whether you can make British subjects quicker out of non-English by the lionizing process of squeezing their mother tongue out of them all at once is, to me, a very open and doubtful question. Make our schools, our laws and institutions generally so attractive to them that they will gladly drop the past, is, to me, a more preferable ... method.

The entire school question heated up for Scott when Reverend MacKinnon waded into the issue. The debate began with an exchange of letters between Scott

and MacKinnon, each letter becoming longer and more vitriolic than the last. The two men extended their written debate to the public forum through open letters to editors of the local newspapers. On December 26, 1915, with Premier Scott present in the congregation, Reverend MacKinnon delivered a 100-minute sermon criticizing Scott and his government for being soft on Catholics with the amendments to the School Act. MacKinnon charged that Scott was accepting direction from the Catholic Church and making it easier for Roman Catholics to establish separate schools. At first, Scott gave the impression to one of the key German Liberals in the province that there was nothing to worry about concerning MacKinnon's charges:

> My friend and pastor, Reverend Mr. MacKinnon, Sunday evening opened up with vigor against the little amendment which we adopted three years ago with regard to separate schools. The sword which Mr. MacKinnon wields is a double edged one, and I am not losing any sleep over the matter.

Scott's early bravado changed to action when, in January 1916, he wrote to a friend in Victoria that MacKinnon "broke loose again." It troubled him that MacKinnon delivered this critical sermon in his own (Scott's) church: "Anyway controversies with clergymen are very delicate business for politicians." Scott was determined, though, to speak his mind: "Ecclesiastical fur will be flying in this neighbourhood the next few weeks." Scott was convinced that he was right and that he had the public on his side.

On February 25, 1916, with Reverend MacKinnon in the galleries of the Legislative Chamber, Scott sought his revenge, announcing in debate that the government intended to repeal the Education Act amendments because they were no longer needed. He informed the Legislative Assembly that in correspondence with Judge McLorg, the justice had admitted that in the Vonda decision, he had not been aware of "earlier and contrary decisions of two higher court judges." Because of this retraction by Judge McLorg, Scott believed that the previous amendments to the School Act were redundant. The day after Scott's speech, McLorg publicly denied that he had reconsidered his decision.

Nonetheless, the *Leader* reported that Scott was in "excellent form and his presentation of facts was a masterly effort." He gave a detailed account of the history of the School Act and the McLorg judgement. It was only near the conclusion of his speech that he went beyond his usual cautious path, explaining to the MLAs and the public why he had written so many public letters about the school question. Calling Reverend MacKinnon a "moral leper," he felt it was his duty to reveal to the public this threat to society: "The intellectual and spiritual leper is very much more dangerous, especially when he is found in the most sacred position in our civilization." Scott crossed the line in his attack on his rival. His controversial remarks, although brief, were caustic and deadly, and in attacking the Presbyterian minister, he made Presbyterians the enemy. Scott had devoted his political career to cultivating the support of diverse groups, including the Presbyterians. He had taken pains not to alienate any segment of society and he was proud of his ability to unite disparate groups into the Liberal party. In his agitated state over MacKinnon, however, he caused more damage than he realized.

Almost immediately after this speech, Scott left Regina for Montreal and then went on to Nassau. The reaction to Scott's "MacKinnon speech" was quick and vociferous. W.M. Martin wrote: "You did yourself a whole lot of harm." He urged Scott to get some rest. George Langley, an outspoken member of Scott's Cabinet, blamed Scott for the MacKinnon affair. Langley believed that Scott was right but that he had verbally beaten MacKinnon so badly that the latter had gained public sympathy. He criticized Scott for introducing a personal element into the debate and making MacKinnon a martyr. Langley wrote that Scott had acted out of character and that Scott's political friends and supporters were beginning to doubt his political judgement. This was the first sign that the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan was having doubts about Walter Scott's leadership, and that he was becoming a liability. Langley urged Scott not to fight religion, fearing that Scott would destroy the Liberal Party.

While in Nassau, Scott intended to continue the debate and to send letters critical of MacKinnon to Regina for publication in the newspapers. J.F. Kerr of the *Leader* and Scott's Cabinet colleagues were reluctant to print these letters in the paper. Scott refused to back down on the issue, writing to Calder: "I am ready and willing to quit the political post right away but I shall not withdraw from the fight in the MacKinnon matter as long as breath is left in me or until the issue is settled fairly. I know that I am wholly honest and right in the matter."

It is clear, however, that the major players in the Liberal Party had arranged for Scott to be out of town for some time until the MacKinnon affair had blown over. Calling his trip to Nassau a "practically compulsory absence," Scott wrote to Lottie Craig, who had been his secretary for sixteen years, that he would be away until the middle of June: "Anyway this is what Mr. Calder and Mr. Ross proposed." Scott resented being forced to be away during the biggest crisis in the history of his government: "There is such a thing as being too much out of affairs."

Even though Calder urged Scott to leave town, he asked Scott not to resign: "Under no circumstances must you think of dropping out." In a telegram to Calder, Scott confirmed that he would not. Calder reassured Scott:

> Would suggest that you do not bother your head with the troubles we are in just now. It is far better that you should have an easy mind and no worries as later on you will need every ounce of your strength... After all Walter don't worry. If the worst comes to the worst we will both have a chance for a rest — something we both need.

Was Calder trying to keep Scott in office so that the government would not look weak during the investigations by the three commissions? Perhaps Calder believed that Scott could recover and return to Saskatchewan politics, as he had done for the 1912 election.

Attorney General W.F.A. Turgeon, Scott's long-time friend, urged him to rest and take a low profile: "Any change in the leadership of the Party would immediately put me back in private life, while with you at the head I am willing to stay in the ring just so long as you may deem it expedient." Turgeon wrote that he would rather face Tories in the next election than Presbyterians. Thomas Miller, Scott's manager of the *Times*, reported that Scott had gone too far in verbally beating up on a clergyman. Motherwell believed that MacKinnon received what was coming to him but urged Scott to leave MacKinnon alone.

To her brother-in-law, Jessie Scott expressed a desire for her husband to get out of politics, but only after this particular storm had blown over:

> I will be glad when the day comes that he [Walter] will be out of politics. We may not have so much money to spend and not go so much but for myself I would not care and I really think both Walter and Dorothy would be better off if they did not go so much. I would not like to see them go out just now until things are cleaned up but in another five years I would not much mind.

The *Leader*, staying loyal to Scott and his government throughout the investigations, reported:

> And despite their [the Conservatives] fond hopes and expectations the Scott Administration is still firmly seated in the saddle, the rights of the Legislative Assembly have been upheld, the responsible government of the good old British kind continues to prevail in Saskatchewan.

After some rest in Nassau, Scott came back to Regina in good form, but not long after his return to the pressures of the premiership, he was ill again. This time he headed to the Mitchell clinic in Philadelphia where he had received good treatment before and might again.

The criticism of Scott began to mount. The *Province* ran an article by George H. Barr, identified as a prominent Liberal, arguing that it was time for the Scott government to go, particularly due to Scott's attack on Reverend MacKinnon. Barr wrote that even though he was a Liberal, he refused to be identified with the Scott government. Barr was critical of Scott for going to Nassau when his government was under investigation and just after his attack on Murdock MacKinnon. If the Barr letter was representative of public opinion, Scott was becoming a liability to the Liberal Party. The party had been able to weather Scott's absences before, but his attack on the church, and a fiery orator such as MacKinnon, became too much to overlook. The party did not, however, want to consider the premier's resignation while under investigation by the three commissions.

By August 10, 1916, the Scott Cabinet was cleared of any wrong-doing by the Brown Elwood Commission, and the time was right for Scott to bow out gracefully. Calder, having felt the strain as acting premier for all of the time that Scott was away, finally decided to consult with J.H. Ross and a few "close friends":

> In the end we [Ross and Calder] decided that in his own best interest he [Scott] should resign. When we broached this matter to him a day or so later he fully agreed without hesitation. That same evening he handed his resignation to Senator Ross on the understanding that it would be handed to the Lieutenant Governor as soon as his colleagues and supporters agreed on his successor.

Calder wrote to W.S. Fielding, a federal Liberal, that Scott's resignation had required very careful handling out of respect for the premier but for the good of the party: "Now that it is accomplished I am convinced that taken all in all we have improved our position in the province."

Scott signed his letter of resignation while he was in Philadelphia and it became effective October 20, 1916. According to Calder, he and Ross had consulted before the latter went to Philadelphia to meet with the premier. This must have been difficult for Ross, for he and Scott were old friends, but the party had become convinced

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William M. Martin (1876-1970), succeeded Scott as premier of Saskatchewan.

that Scott was no longer an asset and it was time for him to resign. After several days of reflection and advice from his physicians, Scott agreed to sign the letter, bringing to an end a career of more than eleven years in service to his province.

Once the public heard of Scott's resignation, letters of support poured in from loyal supporters. H.L. Lovering, a farmer and owner of a nursery near Regina, wrote that he had not been involved in politics but he wanted to thank Scott for his leadership, for being a statesman with "vision and courage." Even though he at first thought Scott had been wrong on the school question, in the end he conceded that Scott had been right. Even the opposition newspapers in the province rallied to praise Scott. The *Moose Jaw Daily News* reported that, though the paper did not agree with Scott politically, the editors admired his integrity. Throughout the investigations arising out of the Bradshaw charges, "the character of Hon. Walter Scott continues unassailed." The newspaper noted that Scott had an aptitude "for anticipating the probable course of public opinion on questions of policy which came to him through his newspaper training, made him a man of uncommon strength with the public." The 1916 *Canadian Annual Review* eulogized Scott:

> He fought to the last with characteristic vigour and though there were clouds and corruption charges in the air during his last days in office, they did not personally touch him nor, in the end, his ministers.

Publicly stating that "physicians had ordered a complete rest from all work and responsibility for a year," Scott left politics with the intention that he would be fully recovered from his depression within two years and that he would make a successful return to politics at that time. He resigned at age forty-nine, still a young man with time to make a comeback. J.W. McLeod, Scott's private secretary, believed that his long-time boss would return:

> You [Scott] had weathered the gale so often in the past that I felt confident that you would do so again and come back to us with your strength renewed for the fight that we are likely to have at the forthcoming session and a little later in the election scrimmage.

Historian J. William Brennan has stated of Scott: "Though he was not the master of intricate political detail... Scott had proven himself a match for any opponent on a public platform or on the floor of the Legislature."[17] When President Walter Murray learned of Scott's resignation, he wrote to Mrs. Scott:

> His integrity, his truthfulness, his courage and his loyalty to friends and colleagues have never been seriously questioned, while his large views and deep sympathies with the plain men who work and suffer have given him an influence and a power that perhaps his great modesty prevented him from realizing.

Jim Calder was proud of the accomplishments of Scott's legacy:

> [the] Walter Scott government had done its best to create the fundamental laws that would reasonably take care of the lives, needs and activities of the people of Saskatchewan.

In later years, Calder summed up Walter Scott's government years:

> They were years of intensely interesting work, great activity, hard work, long hours, much travelling and many difficulties accompanied however at all times with a feeling that something real was being accomplished for the future life of the province and its people.

Two years after his resignation, Scott had neither recovered his health nor returned to Saskatchewan politics. Instead, he was still thinking about his lost battle with Murdock MacKinnon. Scott wrote that he was somewhat improved in health due to "the fortitude and faith of friends, including my wife, to whom I can never be half grateful enough." Scott concluded that he had made a mistake with MacKinnon: "I drove a man wearing sacred cloth so utterly and so defencelessly into a corner that sympathy was created for him." Yet, just the thought of MacKinnon years later caused a further outburst of anger from Scott, in which he argued that he had been right and that MacKinnon was "a deliberate, persistent, malicious slanderer, falsifier and destroyer of the truth and facts."

Scott wrote to George Langley that he believed that he had been proven correct in how he dealt with the school question: the problem had been that his friends had not acted to protect his reputation. Scott was not able to forgive or forget, and felt he had been wrongly accused by his own church and forsaken by his colleagues. As time passed, Scott rationalized his own actions, denying that he was mentally ill or that there was anything wrong with his judgement. He wrote that he intentionally let himself "appear mad clear through to attract to the row the attention of the classes whose votes we needed to offset any votes lost because of our position on the Amendments." After two years of rest and exile, Walter Scott's perception of the MacKinnon incident had not yet cleared. Scott went into a deep depression after his retirement and spent two years in Los Angeles, unable to return to his home province until 1918. He continued to be angry about his last few months in office and felt betrayed by his friends.

Since the correspondence files for 1916-18 are virtually empty, one can safely assume that he did not write many letters. Scott was bitter over the MacKinnon incident and was unable to reflect positively on his many accomplishments in his eleven years as premier. If he did have moments of self-congratulation and a sense of satisfaction about the progress and development in Saskatchewan under his leadership, the records do not show it. From having been the centre of attraction in Saskatchewan politics, he soon believed he was a forgotten man.

Chapter 9
Life After Politics

[1916-1938]

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You [Walter Scott] with your wonderful,—almost supernatural,—ability to know what the people want before they know it themselves and the courage that you have always shown in following the path that you knew to be right, no matter who opposed.

— Lottie Craig, August 13, 1918

Retirement for Walter Scott at age forty-nine was very difficult, after eleven years as premier of Saskatchewan, with a full schedule of meetings, responsibilities and travel. At the time of his resignation, he was in the Weir Mitchell clinic, Philadelphia, where instead of finding a cure, his spirits plunged further into the depths of a depression which lasted nearly two years. He then moved to Los Angeles where he stayed in a hotel. According to Scott, his daily mood was as if he were going to his own hanging. Finding that when he was depressed he could neither write letters nor meet with people, he became a recluse. After having been a journalist and prolific letter writer all of his professional life, he did not write letters for a period of two years, with the exception of an occasional letter to W.R. Motherwell. Scott described to Motherwell his inability to go out of the house and to meet people. Occasionally he would make the effort to go out, which often led to greater fatigue and more depression. Scott found that the easiest route was to stay home: "for 18 months I was incapable of consecutive thinking and altogether lost touch with current literature and progress of thought on these and all other questions."

Scott had one faithful political friend who stayed by his side through illness and health. Jim Ross had been influential in attracting Scott to politics in 1886, had maintained a close friendship throughout their political careers, and travelled the world in search of a cure for Scott. In 1917 Ross sent a telegram to Calder during the Liberal convention, asking him to keep Scott's name before the Liberals: "Tell the convention Walter Scott is with you today in spirit. He keeps in touch with all great public matters and to the joy of all Liberals will be with you in the flesh within two years." Scott, in turn, cherished Ross's friendship, writing to him: "I know that there is nobody in the world who has or who has ever had a man friend quite so good as you have constantly been to me." But Ross was not his only friend. Scott wrote, from time to time, that one of his best friends was his wife, Jessie, but admitted that she did not know all of what was going on.

For Jessie Scott, who was with her husband in Los Angeles during his mental anguish, it was a very difficult time. She had lost the social contact and the circle of friends in Regina that she had enjoyed as the Premier's wife, and her husband was not a fit companion. Scott himself admitted as much:

> How my wife ever stood the strain of those long months is past understanding. She had an ever-reviving faith and courage that was amazing — and Jim Ross, well I think no man can ever have had such a friend as he has been to me. The two of them have saved me from going under altogether.

Life on the political sidelines was not pleasant for a man who had been in the centre of events for nearly two decades. Even though people vowed that Scott would not be forgotten and many of his political colleagues wrote letters to him after his retirement, the letters soon stopped when he did not reply.

Scott blamed his difficulties on his lack of formal education, convinced that quitting school after grade eight had been "fatal" to his career. His years of work ended early and now he was experiencing "years of idle misery." Years later, in one of his last letters before his death, Scott confided to his friend, the Reverend Inkster, a Presbyterian minister, that he had considered suicide during his bouts of depression:

> what prevented me from trying to end it all definitely, God only knows; — at the time I believed the chief reason was lack of courage to do it; whenever I heard of cases of suicide, I envied the courage of those who went out that way.

By the spring of 1918, the depression lifted and Scott began to feel somewhat better. He returned to Regina for a brief visit before travelling to Victoria to take up residence in the Empress Hotel. The Scotts were able to live comfortably in retirement on an income from their real estate holdings and the *Moose Jaw Times*.

When Scott was feeling better, he took a renewed interest in Canadian politics. He supported Jim Calder when he resigned from the Martin government in Saskatchewan to join Robert Borden's Union Government in Ottawa, because this was a wartime effort and a strong government to lead the country was important. Scott was critical of Wilfrid Laurier in refusing to join this government: "In my view Sir Wilfrid made the cardinal mistake of his life in refusing to join Borden." As well, Scott disagreed with Laurier over the conscription issue, favouring an all-out effort to end the war in order to protect the British Empire and the democratic principles it stood for. Scott was suspicious of the French-Canadian factor in government: "I should not want a government at this time with the head and body of it so much subject to Quebec influence as a Government led by Sir Wilfrid was sure to be." Scott saw no contradiction in supporting the rights of German immigrants in Saskatchewan while criticizing the French-Canadian influence in central Canada. Yet throughout these trying war years, Laurier wrote to Scott that even though they had disagreed over conscription, they were still friends. Laurier conceded Scott's right to support conscription but wrote that he still admired Scott.

With Scott's return from the United States, rumours began in earnest that he was preparing for a political comeback, and an editorial in the *Saskatoon Phoenix* speculated that Scott would return to politics. Scott disagreed, saying that he intended eventually to return to Saskatchewan to take up the newspaper business again, but he was not inclined to return to politics. Unfortunately, his return home was not without relapses. By December 1918, Scott still had days of feeling like a "has been" with "no possible chance of being anything else to the end of his miserable days." One of the things that he missed most in being out of public life was the special treatment he had received wherever he went. Since his retirement, people treated Scott like a common citizen, to which it was difficult for him to adjust. While a patient at the Mayo clinic in Rochester, New York, in December 1918, Scott

complained about no longer having a secretary and having to wait in line like all the other patients. He reminisced about the "good old days" when he had been "wined and dined" by important people. A retired premier received none of these privileges of office. In a letter to the Mayo clinic, he complained that he had met with prime ministers and Cabinet ministers of many different countries yet he received no special treatment from the clinic. His confrontational behaviour with the administration of the clinic and the letter of complaint became a trend that Scott exhibited throughout his later years. He became more aggressive and unhappy with the world and how he felt he was treated by it.

Scott's feelings of rejection increased when, on his return to Regina in July 1919, the Liberal caucus was meeting and he was not invited to attend. The members knew, according to Scott, that he was in the Legislative Building where the caucus was meeting but did not invite him, heightening his feeling of being a "has been."

In November 1918, Walter Scott began to write editorials for the *Moose Jaw Times*, which many thought was the beginning of a return to normal life for the former premier. In the first article, which appeared on November 23, 1918, Scott gave his background and an outline of his political career, and announced that he was returning to journalism. At first, the articles outlined the positive achievements of the "progressive" Scott government. The Co-operative grain elevator system, the closing of the bars and the granting of the vote to women were examples cited as to the progressiveness of the government under his leadership. In the articles, Scott announced that he hoped to offer solutions to public policy. In subsequent articles, he began to take a more aggressive stance, arguing that, since the war was over, the time had come for the Union Government to disband and for the Liberals who had joined it to return to their natural party. In a private letter, Scott called the Borden government a "maggotty [*sic*] aggregation."

News that Scott had returned to the world of journalism spread across Canada and was reported in the *Globe*. Scott continued to write two editorials every week but the tone of the articles soon became bitter and vindictive. The newspaper became a vehicle for a disappointed former leader to wash the old "dirty linen" in public. Scott wondered in his articles if he would have had his "breakdown" if he had stayed out of politics. Would life have been easier if he had stayed in journalism? After writing on average two articles or editorials per week from November 23, 1918 to March 20, 1919, Scott found that he could not continue to write coherently. The title he adopted for his column was: "Silly Squibs by that 'Sick Slacker' Scott." His return to sound mental health had been short-lived.

There were some bright moments for Scott in his retirement. He took great joy in knowing that the courts ruled that he had been correct in his assessment of the education system, and that he had been vindicated on his amendments to the School Act of which MacKinnon had been so critical. After the Scott government had repealed the controversial amendments to the School Act in 1916, the government appealed the issue to the Supreme Court of Saskatchewan and ultimately

to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in England, the highest court of appeal in the British Empire at that time. On July 31, 1918, the Privy Council ruled that once a separate school district was established, the religious minority was obliged to support it. This was in line with Scott's argument two years earlier. The August 6, 1918 *Morning Leader* proclaimed in a headline: "Walter Scott Vindicated." The article went on to say:

> The result speaks for itself. Whatever opinion one may have of the constitutional law in controversy, the sincerity of Mr. Scott, his honesty of purpose, and the accuracy of his judgement can no longer be disputed. Nor can anyone say that the attitude of the Government under his leadership and under that of Mr. Martin has not been strictly in accordance with the principles of fair dealing.

With Scott back in the news, rumours of his political return began to circulate. As Laurier was aging, speculation began as to who would be his successor. Motherwell wrote to Laurier that Martin or perhaps Scott would be his successor. Even during the war, Lottie Craig, Scott's secretary, believed that he should take over from Laurier. J.H. Haslam, a prominent Liberal in Saskatchewan, wrote that once Scott's health had returned, he could become prime minister. But Scott knew the reality of his future: his era had passed and he was not capable of taking up the torch from Laurier. Yet the rumours persisted. Lottie Craig reported to Scott that people in Saskatchewan were speculating that he would be appointed lieutenant-governor of the province. If Scott did not become the lieutenant-governor, and if the Liberals were re-elected federally, Craig was sure he would be named to the Senate. She had great admiration for her former employer, writing to him:

> You with your wonderful, — almost supernatural, — ability to know what the people want before they know it themselves and the courage that you have always shown in following the path that you knew to be right, no matter who opposed.

She felt that Scott's most positive attribute was his ability to know what the people wanted. Although Craig was not a neutral observer, she reflected the admiration Scott's close associates had for him, notwithstanding his illness.

In his retirement, Scott received recognition from his province. In March 1918, the University of Saskatchewan established a scholarship in his name for agricultural students. In 1925, Scott received an honorary degree from the university that had been founded during his premiership. Unfortunately, due to ill health, Scott did not attend the convocation ceremonies. President Murray wrote to Scott advising him that the honorary degree had been granted for Scott's contribution to the province:

> Your great services to Saskatchewan in the organization of the new province, and the planning of its public buildings and in the provision of public services, was so manifest to all that everyone was delighted to do you honour.

Even though Scott had the outward appearance of returning to normal life in the summer of 1918, he still exhibited signs of instability, writing to Laurier that Martin and Calder were trying to portray him (Scott) as insane; paranoia was part of Scott's psychiatric condition. Scott's entire Cabinet had been extremely loyal to

him, particularly Calder, who had been acting premier during nearly half of Scott's term. Calder refused the leadership when Scott resigned, thus proving that he had no personal motive in urging Scott to retire from politics. Yet, Scott lashed out against those who had suggested that he step down, writing that Jessie had suspected Calder of spreading gossip about Scott's mental health. Over the years, she had told Walter that she did not like J.K. McInnis (an old business partner), Frederick Haultain, or Jim Calder. Scott now believed that Jessie had been correct all along in her assessment of these men. By the end of the war, when Calder did not leave the Union Government and return to the Liberal fold, Scott admitted that he had lost faith in him, which compounded his belief that Calder was spreading lies about him. Scott wrote that "Calder has gone wrong in public matters, and he broke faith with me personally in a semi-private matter." In his "falling out" with Calder, Scott followed a lifelong pattern of disagreeing with long-time friends.

Walter and Jessie Scott chose Victoria as the place where they wanted to relocate. Still in his early fifties, Scott found that he could not work, nor did he wish to re-enter politics. They lived in the Empress Hotel for several months before Jessie initiated the purchase of a house in the Oak Bay area of Victoria. In March 1919, they sold their house in Regina, thereby cutting their ties with Saskatchewan. Even though Scott wrote that he intended to return to Regina in several years, he admitted that he did find the Regina winters long and cold. However, Scott missed the prairies: "there is no place like the prairie. As always, the first good look at the prairie near Calgary, was just like a good draught of water to the thirsty person." He felt that Victoria was very quiet but it offered a more moderate climate by the sea: "Even if the people here are dead if unburied, there are compensations."

Walter Scott returned to Saskatchewan politics for one brief interlude. In October 1919, when Motherwell ran in a federal by-election, he returned to give a hand to his old friend and former Cabinet colleague. Even though Scott "enjoyed being at the old game again," the campaign was not successful for Motherwell, and Scott returned to private life.

From 1918-20, Scott experienced a series of personal mishaps. A newspaper reported that he was fined $15 for failing to stop his car as he passed a stationary street car; Scott declared that he would appeal the conviction. On December 18, 1920, Scott had another incident with his car when he ran over a pedestrian named John Thompson. Thompson was unhurt but Scott wrote to the chief of police, complaining about the lack of enforcement of the law regarding pedestrians. Then, on December 22, 1920, Thompson wrote to Scott, thanking him for replacing the clothes that had been damaged in the mishap.

In another incident, on July 28, 1919, while Scott was journeying by train to the United States, he was arrested at the Pembina border crossing by an American border officer named E.R. Russell when he failed to give a permanent address and listed farming as his occupation. Scott had probably become aggressive toward the guard on being questioned and ended up in a holding cell under arrest. He then broke down a wall, escaped from the guard house, and continued on his journey without the permission of the American government to enter the country. Scott was insulted by this treatment and sent letters and telegrams to the Canadian prime

minister and the American president seeking restitution for himself and punishment for the border guard. Scott also wrote to Russell, accusing him of being the "rankest kind of coward" and claiming that he broke out because, in the three hours he had been in the cell, he had not been fed; Scott was convinced that the Americans were trying to starve him. This incident indicates that Scott's instability had surfaced once again, and in a pattern that would become increasingly frequent, he lashed out in an irrational manner when confronted by authority.

In August 1919, when Scott attended the Liberal national convention to choose a successor to Wilfrid Laurier, he showed once again why he was unable to return to politics. Writing to W.S. Fielding, Laurier's former minister of Finance and a leadership contender, Scott stated that while he had voted on every ballot for Fielding, he thought that Mackenzie King was actually "the best man available for the leadership." While it might be understandable that Scott supported Fielding since he believed King had no chance of winning, he showed poor political judgement in telling Fielding that he was not the best person for the job. Scott had lost his ability to pull friends and allies together in a common cause. Scott sent a letter to King, telling him that he would make a fine leader even though he had personally voted for Fielding. Scott renewed his pressure to ensure that the Liberal Party moved closer to Ontario than Quebec, urging King to: "Keep yourself a distinctly Ontario man, — we need strengthening in Ontario. A few less seats in Quebec may be advantageous." King responsed that he would welcome Scott's advice at any time.

Scott had some inconsistencies in his own philosophy. As has been shown, Scott supported individual and minority rights with the quiet hope that all new immigrants would voluntarily adopt the British and Protestant culture, language and value system. Yet he felt that French Canadians were disloyal to Britain and to Canada in their lack of enthusiasm for the war effort. Scott was consistent in his support of British values and the minorities who he believed could become loyal British subjects. Since he believed that French Canadians did not fall into this category, they were not to be trusted with control of the levers of federal power.

Throughout Scott's political life, Liberalism was the central focus. He believed that the Liberal Party was Canada's natural governing party: "Canada's welfare is affected by whatever affects the Liberal Party." Scott believed in unions but did not see them becoming a political force:

> I am a thorough believer in labor unionism too, — until I became an employer I held membership in an union, — yet it is my firm conviction that a purely labor party is too narrow to entrust with the affairs of the country.

Although Scott was a long-time supporter of a progressive liberal party, he was somewhat disillusioned:

> my faith is in a Liberal or Progressive party; — and I am too old and have seen too much of parties from both outside and inside to expect anything approaching perfection from them.

While Scott was wrestling with his own mental health, personal physical injury occurred frequently. On November 29, 1919, while he was enjoying a round of golf,

he hit a golf ball into a large rock and the ball came straight back and hit him in the eye. The injury led to a loss of vision in the eye. It would be a source of discomfort, and finally required corrective surgery.

In all, Scott's retirement was filled with stressful events which led to further rounds of depression. Notwithstanding his eye injury, he left on December 1, 1919, with Jim Ross on another world tour, once again resorting to world travel with a friend when his depression became too much to bear. The travel, however, did not bring Scott total peace, because, while on the ocean liner, Scott had a confrontation with the ship's captain over the storage of a trunk. This incident led to further accusations and letter writing. A common thread had developed in Walter Scott's life. He had become disillusioned about politics and found the adjustment to retirement very difficult. His mental instability contributed to this lack of adjustment. He reacted aggressively towards anyone in authority who did not know him or would not give him preferred treatment. From having been in a position of telling people what to do, he now had to take direction from others. This was a pattern in his life that later would have serious ramifications.

One of the most tragic events for Walter Scott in his later years was the death of his wife in 1932. There is nothing in Scott's correspondence files about Jessie's death, but judging from his letters about her while she was alive, the loss must have been devastating. With Walter's bouts of depression and lengthy absences, he had not been an easy person to live with, yet Jessie was always at his side. We know little about Jessie Read Scott. She disliked the spotlight of politics and was not relaxed with sea travel, yet she went with Walter by sea, moved to Ottawa, back to Regina, and finally to Victoria without obvious complaint. Together, they raised an adopted daughter, Dorothy, who stayed near her them throughout their lives. Even though Walter idolized his daughter, child care was Jessie's responsibility. Scott always referred to his wife in his correspondence as "Mrs. Scott," yet appeared to love her and counted her as his best friend. Her death must have been a cruel blow to a man who had had his own share of personal grief.

Walter Scott's last years in Victoria were ones of isolation and depression. It was only by June 1935 that he began to feel somewhat better. On June 22, he wrote one of his last letters before his death to his old friend, Reverend Inkster, a minister at Knox Church in Toronto. Scott had just had a day trip to downtown Victoria and he was feeling euphoric. He felt physically handicapped with a lame left leg, one eye "totally blind," and he was unable to read with the other, yet his spirits were good enough to leave the house to visit the dentist and to get his hair cut; during his years of depression, both the doctor and barber had visited him at his home. He noted that over the past years he had even lost his ability to speak in public. He reminisced about a farewell party for Reverend Inkster when the latter was leaving Victoria in 1920. When Scott rose to speak, his mind went blank. He did say a few words, but it was then that he knew his political days were over: "So an old political war horse, get him on his feet and prop him up, will always be able to say something, no matter how little intellect he has left."

To Reverend Inkster, Scott wrote about how he missed his friend Jim Ross, who had died: "He [Ross] was like a real father to me, who never had the advantage of

a father. My own father had passed on before my birth as I must have told you." Thus to a church minister and an old friend, Scott, at the age of sixty-eight, was still talking about his father as if he had died before Scott was born. Privately he knew this story to be untrue, yet publicly he maintained the pretence until his own death.

On the topic of religion, Scott admitted to Inkster that he had had a strict Presbyterian religious youth. On the Sabbath, religious reading was the only recreation allowed: "Nothing but cold victuals on the Sabbath and long faces." Even though he had rebelled against the church, he still felt some condemnation when he saw work being done on a Sunday. Yet he had to admit to his friend that in his latter years, he did enjoy golfing on Sunday rather than going to church. Scott concluded his letter with a solemn plea to his friend to pray for him. He asked Reverend Inkster to thank God for the reprieve he had experienced from his depression and to ask for a continuance of his improved mental health. Scott worried what would become of him, afraid that a home for the "mentally helpless" was in his future.

This eight-page letter gives insight into Scott's mental anguish on his continuing depression and his inability to leave the house. The letter was written (the first in fourteen years, according to Scott) on a rare day when he was feeling much better, but living in fear of a return of the dark days. However, the summer of 1935 was a good time for Scott, and he showed signs of returning to his old, cheerful self. He convinced Dorothy to drive him across Canada so that he could visit old friends, political and non-political alike, in Saskatchewan and Ontario.

By mid-September, the *Regina Leader Post*, with great anticipation, began reporting on the expected arrival of the former premier. Judge Rolison of Winnipeg, who had seen him, said: "Mr. Scott is looking fine." The *Leader Post* announced that after many years of residing in Victoria, Scott was returning to Regina for a visit and that he "is in much better health than he had been for some time." The local Regina newspaper was proud to have the former premier in the Queen City: "Saskatchewan citizens, whatever their political sympathies, cannot recall him with other than appreciation."

By coincidence or design, it turned out that the federal election was in full swing while the Scotts were visiting in Saskatchewan. The November 4 issue of the *Leader Post* reported that while in Regina, Scott had appeared on stage with the national Liberal leader, William Lyon Mackenzie King. This was one of the few times that Scott had been back to Saskatchewan since leaving the premier's office in 1916. He received a hero's welcome, and it was exciting for him to appear on stage with King, who would win the 1935 election. Sadly, it would prove to be Scott's last triumphant moment.

Later that fall, while continuing their journey eastward, Dorothy and her father were in a serious car accident near Strathroy, Ontario. Caught on icy roads near Scott's birthplace, their car swerved off the road and struck a power pole. After spending some time in the London hospital due to his injuries, Scott joined his daughter and other relatives for Christmas in the London area. He established himself in the Hotel London, while Dorothy stayed with her aunt and uncle, Margaret and Ralph Buttery.

On January 25, 1936, a series of events began to unfold which would lead to Scott's hospitalization and eventual death. When he had checked into the Hotel London, Dorothy had been quite clear with the hotel management that her father had been ill and that he could be hard to handle at times. She arranged that, if any problems should arise, the management would phone her. On January 25, Scott and the manager, a man named Struckett, became involved in a fierce argument over an unpaid account. Apparently, the hotel account was one day overdue and the manager had refused to serve Scott any further meals until his account was settled. During the argument, according to Struckett, Scott threatened to shoot him. The manager called the police, who arrested Scott for uttering threats. The police contacted Dorothy with the news that her father was in the local police station. A magistrate's order committed Scott to St. Joseph's hospital in London. Walter's reply to the accusation of threatening to shoot Struckett was that he intended to "shoot him with a camera." Scott claimed to be as sane as the magistrate and laughed at the assertion that he would have shot the manager. He did not even own a gun. Magistrate Menzies did not accept this story and Scott was admitted to hospital until March 24 on a warrant of remand.

Scott's political and personal friends were able to suppress the incident and there was no report of the altercation at the Hotel London in the local newspapers. After an examination, seven doctors diagnosed Scott as being in the manic phase of manic depressive psychosis.

Although the local newspapers had not reported Scott's hospitalization, the news had travelled quickly back to Saskatchewan. On January 27, 1936, two days following the incident at the Hotel London, Dr. J.W. MacNeill, superintendent and commissioner for mental services at the Saskatchewan Provincial Hospital, North Battleford, wrote to Dr. George H. Stevenson, Medical Superintendent of the London Mental Hospital. Dr. MacNeill reported that he had been requested by some of Scott's friends, including Justice Turgeon, Frederick Haultain, and A.P McNab, to write to the London Hospital about Scott. Even though Scott's friends were conscious that he was well known in Saskatchewan, "everybody thought that he should be put some place where he could be protected, and where the Public would be protected against him." Was this recommendation by Scott's friends made out of genuine concern for his health, or had his state of mental health become an embarrassment to the Liberal Party? If the party establishment had concerns about what he might say or do, the best way to ensure silence was to have him committed to a psychiatric hospital far from home.

Despite Scott's claims of feeling fine and being as sane as the doctors who attended him, the psychiatrists committed him to long-term care. Very concerned about her father, Dorothy felt guilty for leaving him in the London hospital: "Dearest Dad, I can't tell you how badly I feel to be leaving you in that awful place tonight." She tried to convince the doctors that they should release him and that she would look after him, but the combination of the psychiatrists' reports and the pressure from Saskatchewan overpowered Dorothy's influence to have him released. Dorothy became convinced that the best treatment for her father would be placement in the Homewood Sanitarium in Guelph, Ontario, where, ten days

Gordon Barnhart

The Homewood Sanitarium, in Guelph, Ontario

after the incident at the Hotel London, on February 4, 1936, the psychiatrists transferred Scott. Dr. Stevenson had committed Scott to ensure that Dorothy would not be pressured into releasing her father from Homewood.

How did society commit people to psychiatric hospitals in the 1930s in Ontario? The Private Sanatoria Act stated that a committee of a magistrate, a clerk of the peace, the county sheriff, and two medical practitioners would examine a patient to have him or her committed for care to a psychiatric sanatorium. This committee made the decision as to who should be committed and when that person should be released again. According to J.M. Kearns, a clerk of the peace, the decision to release someone after he had been committed did not happen often. The most common forms of treatment in psychiatric centres were rest, diet, exercise, electric shock therapy, purging, and the "baths."[1] Homewood Sanitarium used all of these treatments. According to one advertisement, the sanitarium provided treatment of psychiatric disorders "by means of normal sleep, freedom from worry, cheerful surroundings, quiet and intelligent nursing attention and some occupation that will interest but not irritate."[2] To Dorothy, this sounded like a place where her father would be able to relax and recover.

Homewood Sanitarium had opened in 1883 as the first private psychiatric care centre in Ontario to treat people with "mental disorders" and addictions. The centre had three levels of care. Level one was similar to a luxurious hotel where one could check in and out voluntarily, a place for peace and quiet, a time to rebuild one's life before returning to the outside world. At the second level of care, for those patients who had been committed involuntarily, the furniture was more sparse and the atmosphere closer to a jail than a hotel. At the third level, for patients who were violent and posed a threat to themselves or others, the rooms

had bars on the windows and little or no furniture (which could be a potential weapon for a disturbed patient). The public impression of Homewood was level one, where everyone was a special guest in a luxury hotel. Homewood's "Prospectus," written in 1915, glowingly described its comforts and treatment:

> It would be impossible to secure a more complete privacy, or a more pleasant seclusion than is enjoyed amongst the grassy slopes, shaded walks and the lovely lawns of the Homewood Sanitarium. Here you feel the perfect charm of refined seclusion: here you feel that while the world is near, you are sheltered from its grosser side. It is perfect peace, perfect rest. It is the Homewood.

Scott's stay in Homewood was not as idyllic as the "Prospectus" described. From the daily medical files, it appears as if he resisted life in the sanitarium. At first he maintained a neat and clean appearance and had a good appetite, but he refused to cooperate with sanitarium staff. Throughout his two years in Homewood, Scott kept expecting that someone would come to release him. If he was anticipating guests, he would pack all of his belongings with the notion that they would take him home. When it came time for the visitors to leave, Walter became angry and aggressive upon realizing that he would not be going with them. The psychiatrists noted his aggressive behaviour as "typical" and a further reason why he should remain in Homewood. If Scott was quiet and well-behaved, the diagnosis was that he was accepting his lot in life. There was no behaviour that would have gained his release from such an institution.

This was not an easy time for Dorothy, who had not been totally in favour of his hospitalization but had been convinced by the psychiatrists that this was the best treatment for him. She felt some guilt on having to leave him there, but her father had become a problem to handle, especially when he became angry or aggressive. Most people in psychiatric hospitals were committed by family members as part of a family strategy because they could not control their behaviour any longer: "The decision to commit, therefore, may be seen as a family strategy in a time of crisis."[3]

Two years passed with Walter Scott expecting to be released at any time. He believed that he had been committed falsely and that he had no business being in such an institution. If his behaviour became too loud or aggressive, he was transferred to Ward 2A, an area reserved for patients who were violent. This transfer was called "ward therapy," and the reward for good behaviour was a transfer back to the former ward where the patients were more docile. The ward files show that Scott had been particularly hard to handle on March 19 and had been transferred to Ward 2A. That night, shortly after midnight, according to verbatim transcripts of the coroner's inquest, Scott and Norman McKendry, an attendant, had a struggle over a library book. According to McKendry, Scott "slipped" and fell on the corridor floor. Scott did not complain of any soreness but he refused to stand or to walk, so McKendry dragged him on the floor back to his room. Because Scott still refused to stand or to get back into bed, McKendry left him on the floor for the remainder of the night. McKendry filed no incident report and Scott stayed on the floor in his room until he was discovered by the day staff. Upon being put into bed, he refused to be examined by the physicians. Finally, on Tuesday, March 22, Scott was taken to

the Guelph hospital for an x-ray, which showed that his right hip was broken. After he was casted, Scott was transferred from the hospital back to Homewood.

Meanwhile, on the afternoon after the incident, Homewood moved McKendry from the ward. The explanation given for this transfer was not that he had done anything wrong, but that management wanted someone to be with Scott who could get along with him better. The sanitarium decided not to reprimand or punish McKendry, who had finally filed an incident report on Monday morning, two days after the incident.

Scott remained in Homewood in his ward for the remainder of Tuesday and died at fifteen minutes after midnight on March 23, 1938. Following Scott's death, Dorothy asked that no autopsy be performed, but the coroner conducted an investigation, concluding that Scott died of a blood clot and that there was no relationship with the broken hip. The *Leader Post* reported that Saskatchewan's first premier had died in a Guelph hospital of a "plugged vessel." The article mentioned a heart condition, but did not identify the hospital in Guelph as a psychiatric institution, nor was there any comment about the struggle over the library book in Homewood. The press described Scott as the founder of Liberalism in Saskatchewan, a printer and a man who was not robust, whose health had not been strong throughout his career. The article mentioned the coroner's investigation but informed the Saskatchewan people that their first premier had died a natural death after a lifetime of illness.

At the time of Scott's death, the Ontario government established two Royal Commissions. Although unrelated to Scott's death, the timing of the commissions was opportune. The first, the Barlow Commission, was appointed by the Honourable Harold Kirby, K.C., minister of Health of Ontario, to look into the commitment procedures at Homewood Sanitarium; the government appointed the commission to investigate the case of Angus McIntosh.[4] The commission started its study on March 21, 1938, two days before Scott's death, and sat for fourteen days. The commission heard from witnesses, reviewed the financial records of Homewood, and examined the actual facility.

The commission examined the level of training of the attendants hired in Homewood. It heard testimony that attendants had no background in the care of the mentally ill and received minimal training on the job. One attendant testified that he had been a rubber factory worker while another had been a cook before starting at Homewood. The commission, in its final report, criticized Homewood and made many recommendations for change, including amendments to the Private Sanitarium Act, more training for staff, and more control over private hospitals. The commission noted that some incidents (without mentioning Scott) would not have happened if proper training had been in place. The report noted that due to bad working conditions and low pay, it was nearly impossible to get proper staff, which meant that employees who had not performed up to standard were retained because no one was willing to take their place. C.L. Snyder, counsel representing the province of Ontario before the commission, stated: "None of

these attendants were given any special instructions as to their duties, and they were, in my opinion, entirely unfitted to act as a companion to an inmate of an Institution of this kind with the likelihood of being of any assistance to the patient in recovering." Snyder noted that "once so committed, a patient, so long as he or his relatives are able to pay, may find great difficulty in obtaining his liberty. It is one thing for the state to deprive a person of his liberty; it is another thing for a private institution to be able to detain a man against his will." McIntosh himself testified that Dr. Baugh of Homewood had told him that he was in Homewood "for keeps." Baugh denied having said this and attributed McIntosh's behaviour to "exhibited delusions of persecution typical of sufferers from paranoia." It was, incidentally, Baugh who certified Scott's death.

On September 10, 1938, the government named a second commission to examine psychiatric hospitals in Ontario after the Barlow Commission found so many problems at Homewood. Perhaps the second commission was an attempt by the Ontario government to ensure that conditions found at Homewood were not present at other provincial psychiatric hospitals. The commission made a decision to ignore any letters that indicated "quite clearly that the writer was suffering from a mental illness, and therefore required further attention." Even though the commissions did not look specifically at the Scott case, details of his stay in the sanitarium and of his death came out at the commission hearings.

The testimony at the two commissions revealed many details of the type of treatment given at psychiatric institutions in the 1930s. A patient named Wells, from Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, testified that he had not received any treatment for his alcoholism: "I cannot say there was treatment of any sort, only I was locked up. That was the treatment. They call it 'lock and key treatment.'"

Mr. Hoerday, a Guelph resident who lived next door to Homewood, testified that he witnessed an attendant beating up on a patient outside the gates of the institution. Scott's name came up often in the testimony, clearly indicating that the institution and the city were still upset by his death. Ernest Gavin of Homewood testified that he had witnessed Scott receiving a "shower." Not only was there a traditional shower nozzle on the wall for the patients to shower with but, in some cases, the patients were treated to an additional experience of having an attendant train a high pressured hose on them. The attendant had a control whereby he could vary the temperature of the water from hot to cold and back again. In his testimony, Gavin said: "I thought on different occasions that Mr. Walter Scott shouldn't have been given a shower at a distance, with the hose playing up and down his back, and the water turned from warm to cold, with the heart condition he had. I think he should have had a tub bath." The shower described took place one month before Scott died. During testimony, it was revealed that a patient, Mr. Culligan, had been grabbed by the shoulders, "pushed" and forced into the showers. This particular patient fell and broke his hip, and subsequently died.

Angus McIntosh, the businessman who had lobbied for the investigations into psychiatric hospitals in Ontario, maintained until his death that he had been committed falsely to Homewood. Scott and McIntosh spent many hours together in Homewood, and Scott apparently wanted to stay close to McIntosh for "protection."

McIntosh eventually proved his sanity and gained his freedom, but it came too late to be of assistance to Scott.

It is difficult, by today's standards, not to condemn the accepted means of treatment in psychiatric centres in the 1930s. The debate raged, though, at the commission hearings as to whether Scott received proper care. Mr. Viens, counsel for McIntosh, argued before the commission:

> there is no doubt there was a lack of proper attention given to him [Scott]. A Doctor should have been summoned immediately [after his fall in the corridor] and he should have been attended to that very night.

Mr. Pickup, K.C., counsel for Homewood, noted that Scott had a heart condition:

> it is far worse in my opinion as far as that patient [Scott] is concerned to forcibly remove him [for an x-ray] or to go against his will, thereby exciting him to accomplish the end I can accomplish in other ways.

Homewood spokesmen argued that it was not negligent to leave Scott on the floor overnight, or to wait three days before sending him for x-rays and treatment. To move him against his will, they maintained would have done more harm than good.

Was Scott wrongfully committed to Homewood? Sixty years later, it is impossible to re-examine the psychological state of a man and second-guess the psychiatrists on site, or to judge medical procedures of another time. It would appear that Dorothy was at her wits' end as to what to do with her father, who had a volatile temper and seemed to be increasingly aggressive as he aged. Yet she had asked the hotel to contact her if he was a problem, which it did not. She had wanted him released from the London hospital but the pressure from the medical community and "political friends" in Saskatchewan swayed her. The subsequent commissions and coroner's inquest seem to indicate that, even by 1930s standards, the treatment in psychiatric centres was less than humane. Angus McIntosh had a second chance to prove his sanity and gain his freedom: Walter Scott did not.

Chapter 10
Conclusion

Illustration by Grant Welke

Peace...
Perfect Peace

— Inscription on Walter Scott's Tombstone

Even though Walter Scott died in a psychiatric institution, with no family or loved ones present, he had been a popular premier of Saskatchewan. He and his government enjoyed larger majorities after each general election. The people generally knew that he was ill and away a great deal but they still supported him. The opposition press and the Conservatives publicly criticized Scott's absences, but the majority of the people continued to support him and his vision for the future of the province. They accepted him for who and what he was, believing that it was common for people, especially hard-working, talented people, to overwork and be away for lengthy periods of time. It was a common belief that with a bit of rest and relaxation, a person would return refreshed and ready to continue the battle. Even after Scott's resignation, he received letters from friends and supporters urging him to return to the political field.

Even though Scott was absent from the province for up to six months of every year, he was more than just a popular figurehead. As has been shown, Cabinet delayed many key decisions until Scott's return to the province. Scott led his government on a broad philosophical plain and was content to rely on Calder and Motherwell for the implementation of new programs. Calder seemed content to continue as the "second in command." Both he and the Liberal Party knew that they needed Scott to rally public support, particularly during election campaigns. Jim Ross and Jim Calder travelled with Scott when he was ill and Calder particularly kept the government functioning in his absence. They were quick, however, to spirit him out of town when a breakdown was imminent. Scott's "friends" in Saskatchewan were influential in his committal to Homewood which was out of the Saskatchewan eye. Even on his death, there was a cover-up as to the circumstances so that the people of Saskatchewan could remember him as the popular leader of old.

What kind of leader was Walter Scott? His style was pragmatic rather than dogmatic. He certainly had principles which he would defend, such as the need to eliminate the CPR tax exemption. Yet he was able to adjust his principles to follow the Liberal Party line on the retention of the Crown lands with the federal government. During his time in Ottawa, Scott had learned the art of compromise and the merits of delay. He lobbied hard for the interests of his constituency and the West and was able to follow the party line in exchange for larger compensation grants from the federal government. Scott had strong beliefs and far-reaching goals but was cautious not to implement a new program until he was convinced that the majority of the public

was ready to support him; he did not throw out his point of view to the people and hope that they would follow; first, he had to carefully educate and guide the public will. Having learned patience and a sense of timing, he did not want to be too far ahead of popular support. Notwithstanding the delays and compromises, Scott's long-term principles and goals remained intact.

If Scott had lived in a time of public opinion polling, he would have used this technique regularly on all major initiatives. Even though he did not have the advantage of scientifically measuring the public will, he had several means of keeping his finger on the pulse of the province and the nation. A voracious reader of newspapers, he read a wide variety of local and national newspapers daily, as well as several papers from the United States. Even while he was on extended voyages to other parts of the world, Scott left instructions with his staff to send the newspapers to prearranged destinations so that he could follow the news at home.

While in the province, Scott followed events at the annual meetings of the SGGA and the "Ban the Bar" movement, and it was common for resolutions passed at an SGGA convention to appear on the Liberal agenda in the following year. Scott kept in close contact with the farm leaders by convincing them to join his Cabinet. Since the various pressure groups in the province always had the ear of the premier, he was able to keep in touch with the province's grassroots.

Letter writing was another means that Scott used to keep in close communication with the people of the province. He had a practice of replying to a letter within one day of its receipt, and if he was out of town, J.W. McLeod, his private secretary, would respond, promising that Scott would reply personally on his return. Scott encouraged both supporters and critics to write and advise him on issues, and he used this correspondence as a measure of popular opinion.

Scott continually frustrated the pressure groups by being deliberate in his decision making. For example, in the case of granting women the vote, he had publicly shown that he was in favour of female suffrage several years before the measure was finally introduced. Instead of moving on the issue earlier, Scott insisted that the women's groups go throughout the province collecting signatures on petitions, wanting to be sure that women were in favour of suffrage and proving to him that they could be politically active. The struggle for the women to canvass the province without good roads or a widely used telephone system must have been daunting. Yet Scott insisted that the government would move only if women could show him that there was wide support for the measure. In the end, Scott knew that he could delay no longer because Manitoba and Alberta were also preparing to grant women the vote, and he did not want to tarnish his image of leading a progressive government by falling behind other provinces, though this was a factor only in determining the timing. World War I pressured the Scott government to implement social and legislative change by providing property rights and the vote to women. Scott supported these changes philosophically but it was also good politics. For his time, Scott was a progressive man regarding women and their rights, even if he did view them paternalistically.

Scott was progressive in restricting the sale of alcohol. In his early years, he did not drink alcohol at all, but was not a prohibitionist. From a practical political

point of view, he knew that the Liberal government depended on the support of the immigrant population, which tended to vote against prohibition. Because of the war, Scott was pressured into closing the bars but he believed that, even if prohibition eventually came, it would be a short-term measure. He did not believe that there was public support for total prohibition in the long term, and he carefully balanced the prohibitionist lobby against the immigrant vote. Although the liquor dispensaries were closed soon after Scott's resignation as premier, he was correct in believing that the pressure to close the bars and dispensaries would not last long after the end of the war. As events would show, prohibition laws were nearly impossible to enforce.

Scott assumed portfolios within his own Cabinet which were the pressure points at the time. He was minister of Public Works during the crucial construction phase of the Legislative Building, and minister of Education during the establishment of the University of Saskatchewan. At Oxbow, Scott announced the closing of the bars, and on Valentine's Day, 1916, he announced that his government would grant the vote to women. He announced agricultural programs such as the cooperative grain elevator system even though he had a capable minister of Agriculture. Scott was in the centre of the decision making and was clearly visible as the leader of the government.

Another way that Walter Scott measured public support for a specific policy was to establish a Royal Commission, and this was the manner in which the Scott government studied a broad variety of issues, from liquor boards to cooperative elevators. The commissions were usually composed of one to three commissioners who were experts in their fields. The members of the commissions were not necessarily Liberals but the government knew their backgrounds prior to their appointment, thus ensuring that they were philosophically in line with the government. It was not uncommon for the premier to meet with the members or at least the chairman of the commission before the commencement of their study. Therefore, when the commissions presented their reports, there were therefore no surprises for the government. The commissions not only sampled public opinion but also educated the public on an issue. The reviews usually lasted several weeks or months. In most cases, the government acted quickly after receiving the report, with the exception of the Agricultural Credit Commission. Due to the war, credit was not available and the government did not implement the agricultural credit program.

The government occasionally took risks with its studies. For example, with regard to the grain elevator system, the Conservatives and the SGGA favoured a government-owned elevator system similar to that in Manitoba. Even though Scott appointed two commissioners from the SGGA, the final report supported his own point of view — a cooperative elevator system.

Scott used patronage to his advantage in shoring up support for his government. From the inception of the province until Laurier's defeat in 1911, he had the advantage of having patronage from both the federal and provincial levels. Scott was involved in most appointments but was not blinded by power. He did not hide the fact that he preferred to appoint Liberals to choice positions. He knew their background and felt comfortable in knowing they would support the government.

Yet he insisted that once an individual was appointed to a public service position, he should not be visibly partisan. Scott insisted on hiring or appointing qualified people. He had an ability to collect around him men and women he knew would work in the best interests of the province.

Scott's guiding principles were that government could support society by regulation or by independent boards, but he preferred not to have government directly involved in public ventures. Instead, he supported the cooperative principle. Government became involved with the sale of alcohol after the government closed the bars, but this was done at arm's length through an independent board.

Even though Scott had been raised in a strong Presbyterian home, religion was not a determining factor in his adult life. He was married in a church but his funeral was held in a private funeral home. Scott defended the rights of Roman Catholics to practise their religion and to have religious instruction after school because he believed in these rights. However, it was also a fact that the Liberals depended on the largely Catholic immigrant vote. Scott's public policy was based on his search for a politically acceptable stance rather than religious dogma.

Like many other western Canadian leaders at the time, Scott was from Ontario, but he did not try to fit the West into the Ontario mould. He believed that agriculture was the primary industry of the province and that, if his government wanted to stay in power, it had to provide clean honest government with inventive solutions to farm problems. Many of these solutions, such as the cooperative elevators or telephones, had not been tried in Ontario. Yet with the circumstances in the West, these solutions were popular with the farming population. Unlike the majority of the people in Ontario, Scott did not support the tariff policy of the federal government.

Another important principle in Scott's life was education. He did not have much formal education like Haultain or Davin and he regretted having quit school after grade eight. He saw the importance of education for others and he continued to increase his knowledge and education even if it was not through formal schooling. Scott believed in the common school supported by a Department of Education with the rights of the minorities protected. He was rightfully very proud of the new university in Saskatoon.

As a member of Parliament for five years, and then as premier of Saskatchewan for eleven, Walter Scott represented the ideas and defended the interests of his constituents and his province. He had a keen sense of the ever changing public mood. He was a supporter of Liberal policy such as freer trade, the rights of minorities and public education. He believed that the role of the state was to protect the interests of the minorities and to build a public infrastructure which would serve all the citizens of the province. Scott's government presided over an era of population growth and development in Saskatchewan. The government built roads, bridges, schools, courthouses and a university, and supported the expansion of the railway system within the province.

Behind all of these principles, programs, and policies, who was Walter Scott? He was an effective public speaker, but not as flamboyant as Frederick Haultain. Able

to use bombast in debate and interrupt with interjections, Scott was a fiery speaker who could quickly arouse his audience to anger or laughter. He understood the Saskatchewan people and knew how to outmanoeuvre Haultain. The leader of the opposition was often forced to abandon his original position and look indecisive, or to defend a position which was unacceptable to the people of the province.

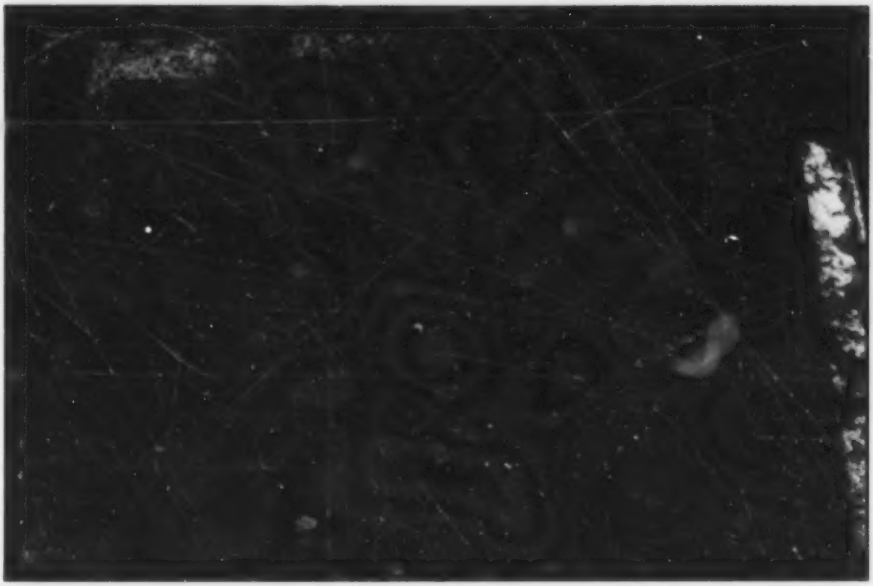
Scott had a vision for the province. Millions of people would arrive, with a family living on every quarter section of land. Villages, towns, and cities would spring up as service centres for this vast rural population, and Saskatchewan would become the largest food producer in the world. For Scott, his role as premier was to provide the public institutions and infrastructure that would allow the province to grow and prosper. He was not only a booster of the province but had foresight. His government provided strong and capable administration to the province. It was an era of confidence, optimism, and rapid expansion in the West and Saskatchewan. The economy experienced its boom and bust cycles. In like manner, Scott had his own personal and psychological ups and downs.

Walter Scott's legacy is in line with his first election slogan: "Peace, Progress, and Prosperity." Perhaps he was fortunate in being premier during the expansion years, but he also led his province during tight financial times. Scott presided over a time of progress in his province and he brought domestic peace to it as he had promised. Immigrants flooded into the province from all parts of Europe to settle the land and put it into production. The government built roads and bridges as well as health and education facilities and a governmental infrastructure. Under Scott's leadership, Saskatchewan grew to be the third most populous province in Canada, prosperous with an expanding economy.

Scott was one of Saskatchewan's strongest premiers, comparable to T.C. Douglas. The two men were premiers in different times, but both were prepared to set a new course for the province. Scott had the challenge of leading a new province with a rapidly growing population, which needed schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and the entire governmental infrastructure. He supported the formation of cooperatives as a mechanism to deliver programs which he did not think the government alone could support financially. The Scott government's program was dedicated to strengthening the rural way of life. Much of the governmental infrastructure that is still in place today — from rural municipalities to the liquor boards — was begun during Scott's time as premier.

In 1916, Scott left office, unhappy and feeling like a man who had been defeated from within. He died alone in an Ontario psychiatric sanitarium. The Saskatchewan Legislature gave little notice to his passing, and the Saskatchewan newspapers reported his death but did not mention his mental illness or that he had died in a psychiatric hospital.

Reverend Inkster, a longtime friend of Walter Scott, performed the funeral service in London on March 26, 1938. Scott's body was taken by train to Victoria for



Gordon Barnhart

Tombstone of Walter and Jessie Scott, Royal Oak Burial Park, Victoria, British Columbia.

interment in Royal Oak Burial Park beside his wife, Jessie. His final resting place was in neither the province of birth nor his adopted province, the one that he had helped to create. The tombstone inscription for Walter and Jessie shows the usual information of their birth and death dates, and contains the inscription: "Peace Perfect Peace" — an ironic reminder of Homewood's motto: "Perfect Peace — Perfect Rest." In the 1905 election campaign, Walter Scott had promised "Peace, Progress and Prosperity," and the concept of "peace" was a constant throughout his life.

Nearly sixty years after the interment, the tombstone is covered with moss, grass clippings, and soil. The lettering on the stone is barely discernible to the close observer and not at all to the casual passerby. The stone has now become as nondescript and forgotten as Scott's career. The system of government and civil service, the Legislative Buildings, the University of Saskatchewan, and the many agricultural programs started by the Scott government still remain in the service of the people of the province, but the name and the man — Walter Scott — have been largely forgotten. The Liberal Party hid from public view his years of inner turmoil and pain both during and after his premiership, to the point that the man and his accomplishments have been forgotten by the generations who continue to benefit from his vision and leadership. Under Scott's leadership, Saskatchewan enjoyed peace, progress and prosperity. Sadly, Scott himself never did.

Walter Scott.

SAB R-B3726

NOTES

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Emil J. Meilicke, *Leaves from the Life of a Pioneer, Being the Autobiography of Sometime Senator Emil J. Meilicke* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1997), 79.
2. For a full discussion of Walter Scott's health, please see Chapter Seven.

Chapter 2: The Early Years

1. The commonly accepted description of the events in Walter Scott's early life is from Scott's unpublished autobiography, the parliamentary guide, and from newspapers of the day.
2. SAB, Walter Scott Papers, Unpublished Autobiography, 85139. The *Regina Leader Post*, March 23, 1938, reported that Walter Scott's father died when Walter was only a baby. In order to make this story more readable, footnotes have been kept to a minimum. Quotations without footnotes are taken from Walter Scott's personal correspondence files which are stored in the Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon. For more details on the letters, please see Gordon Barnhart, "Peace, Progress and Prosperity: A Biography of the Hon. Walter Scott" (PhD dissertation, University of Saskatchewan, 1998).
3. Howard F. Batie (ed.), *The Batie Family History: The Descendants of Thomas Batie and Margaret Robson (ca 1720-1994)* (Sterling, VA: n.p., 1994), 85.
4. Andrew Blaikie, *Illegitimacy, Sex, and Society Northeast Scotland, 1750-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 24.
5. Ibid., 224.
6. Batie, *Batie Family History*, 86.
7. G.A. Scott was the grandson of George Scott.
8. Elizabeth Jane Errington, *Wives and Mothers, School Mistresses and Scullery Maids: Working Women in Upper Canada, 1790-1840* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 235.
9. *Canadian Parliamentary Companion and Annual Register*, edited by C.H. Mackintosh (Ottawa: Ottawa Citizen Printing and Publishing Company, 1882). This companion was the forerunner to the *Parliamentary Guide* which included biographical information on all provincial and federal elected Members and Senators. George W. Ross was first elected in 1872 and reelected in 1874 and 1878. John Watterworth was also elected in 1872 and reelected in 1875 and 1879. Oliver Mowatt (1820-1903) articled in law under Sir John A. Macdonald. Mowatt was a Conservative in his youth and participated in the Quebec Conference during the confederation negotiations. Later a moderate Liberal, Mowatt succeeded Edward Blake as premier of Ontario. He advocated provincial rights and convinced Macdonald that Canada should be less centralized than earlier planned.
10. Paul Voisey, *Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 80.
11. Jim Hamilton Ross was born in London, Ontario in 1856 and became a rancher in the Moose Jaw area. He ran unsuccessfully for the Liberals in Assiniboia West in 1887. He served in the NWT Legislative Assembly from 1883 to 1901 and was in the Haultain

Cabinet as Treasurer and Commissioner for Public Works and Territorial Secretary. He became Commissioner for Yukon Territory in 1901 and served as member of Parliament from 1902 to 1904.

12. C.B. Koester, *Mr Davin M.P.: A Biography of Nicholas Flood Davin* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Books, 1980), 78.
13. Ibid., 81.
14. *Journal*, February 17, 1887, 4.
15. *Standard*, May 21, 1896, 4.
16. Regina *Leader*, June 25, 1896, 4.
17. Lewis H. Thomas, "The Political and Private Life of F.W.G. Haultain," *Saskatchewan History* 23, no. 2 (1970): 56; Grant MacEwan, *Frederick Haultain: Frontier Statesman of the Canadian Northwest* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985), 165.

Chapter 3: Member of Parliament

1. Charles Tupper (1821-1915) had succeeded Mackenzie Bowell as prime minister. He holds the record as the Canadian prime minister with the shortest tenure, May 1 to July 8, 1896.
2. Total vote count for the 1900 general election in Assiniboia West was: Scott (Liberal) 2,093 and Davin (Conservative) 1,861.
3. D.H. Bocking, "Premier Walter Scott, a study of his rise to political power." (MA thesis, History Department, University of Saskatchewan, 1959), 96.
4. Grant MacEwan, *Frederick Haultain: Frontier Statesman of the Canadian Northwest* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985), 125.
5. D.H. Bocking, "Saskatchewan's First Provincial Election," *Saskatchewan History* 17, no. 2 (1964): 75.
6. MacEwan, *Frederick Haultain*, 155.
7. D.J. Hall, "A Divergence of Principle: Clifford Sifton, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the North West Autonomy Bills, 1905," *Laurentian University Review* 7, no. 1 (November 1974): 4.
8. The result of the 1904 federal general election in Assiniboia West was: Walter Scott (Liberal) with 3,647 votes compared to G.M Annable with 2,865 votes, a majority of 782.
9. SAB, Walter Scott Papers, House of Commons, *Debates*, 85890. Scott conformed this point of view in a letter to W.A. Burton of Medicine Hat on March 9, 1905.
10. Chester Martin, *"Dominion Lands" Policy* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1938), 211.
11. With a population of 250,000 to 400,000, the payment was 1% of the fund or $375,000 per year. The rate went to 1.5% with a population of 400,000 to 800,000 and 2% for 800,000 to 1,200,000. Above that, the rate went to 3%. Ibid., 211, 212.
12. A recurrent theme in Scott's letters was how much the province had grown and the increase in wheat production. This praise of growth was echoed in the speeches from the Throne at the opening of each new Session of the Legislature.
13. Martin, *"Dominion Lands" Policy*, 467.
14. Frank H. Underhill, "Edward Blake" in Claude T. Bissell (ed.), *Our Living Tradition: Seven Canadians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 23.
15. Manoly Lupul, *The Roman Catholic Church and the North-West School Question: A Study in Church-State Relations in Western Canada, 1875-1905* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 168.
16. C.B. Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1959), 262.
17. House of Commons, *Debates*, March 31, 1905, 85809.
18. David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905- 1971* (Toronto:

University of Toronto Press, 1975). 22.The northern seats averaged approximately 635 voters compared to an average of 1,245 voters in southern ridings.

19. Under election law at this time, any member of Parliament who was appointed to the Cabinet was required to resign his seat in the House of Commons and run in a by-election. In many cases, the by-election was not contested by the opposing party.
20. O.D. Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Vol. 2 (New York: The Century Company, 1922), 243.
21. G.H.V. Bulyea was born in New Brunswick in 1859 and was first elected to the NWT Legislative Assembly in 1894. He was reelected in 1897 and joined the Haultain-Ross Cabinet. He continued as a MLA until the formation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905.
22. C. Cecil Lingard, *Territorial Government in Canada: The Autonomy Question in the Old North-West Territories* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), 241.
23. Section 58 of the British North America Act, 1867, empowered the Governor General, on advice of the federal Cabinet, to name the lieutenant-governor.
24. Jessie and Walter Scott adopted Dorothy Louise Read, Jessie's niece, when she was a child. She was born in 1897 but Walter Scott's files do not mention Dorothy's background. Her parentage or the reasons she was up for adoption were a well-kept secret.

Chapter 4: "Mr. Premier"

1. G.H.V. Bulyea was the commissioner who became the lieutenant-governor of Alberta. The two deputy commissioners who moved to the new Alberta public service were D.S. MacKenzie and John Stocks.
2. Jeffrey Simpson, *Spoils of Power: The Politics of Patronage* (Toronto: Collins, 1988), 6.
3. D.H. Bocking, "Saskatchewan's First Provincial Election," 44.
4. Lewis H. Thomas, "The Political and Private Life of F.W.G. Haultain," *Saskatchewan History* 23, no. 2 (1970): 55.
5. David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905-71* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 25.
6. The following quotations are from the *Regina Leader*, August-December 1905.
7. D.H. Bocking, "Premier Walter Scott, a study of his rise to political power" (MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1959), 128.

Chapter 5: The New Government

1. J.E. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History* 5, no. 3 (1952): 99.
2. The Saskatchewan Act, as passed by the Parliament of Canada, specified that Regina would be the capital city unless changed by the Saskatchewan Cabinet. Since the motion promoting Saskatoon as the capital was defeated, no further action was taken and Regina remained the capital under the authority of the Saskatchewan Act.
3. David R. Murray and Robert A. Murray, *The Prairie Builder: Walter Murray of Saskatchewan* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1984), 43.
4. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy," 103. Reference to a letter from W.S. to Senator T.O. Davis, May 3, 1906.
5. SAB, Department of Public Works files, # R 195.2, W.S. to F.M. Rattenbury, November 1, 1906.
6. Using Statistics Canada's Consumer Price Index, $1 million in 1907 would be worth more than $15.5 million in the year 2000.
7. Michael Hayden, *Seeking a Balance: The University of Saskatchewan, 1907-1982* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983), 12.

8. J.E. Murray, "The Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History* 12, no. 1 (1959): 4.
9. University of Saskatchewan Archives, J.E. Murray Papers, Walter Murray to W.S., December (no date given), 1937.
10. Murray, "The Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," 22. See also Hayden, 43. Hayden disagrees with Jean Murray's analysis arguing that the vote was actually 5-3 with Dixon voting for Regina.
11. Even though Prince Albert and Moose Jaw both elected a Liberal and a Conservative member, it can be speculated that Prince Albert won the political plum because of the presence of Lamont (Liberal from Prince Albert) in Cabinet. Moose Jaw was not so lucky. Battleford elected a Liberal member.
12. J.J. Hill was the owner of the St Paul, Minnesota and Manitoba Railway.
13. David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905-1971* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 37. The electoral boundaries were determined by Cabinet and ratified in law by the Legislative Assembly.

Chapter 6: Agriculture: "The Foundation of Civilization"

1. The population of Saskatchewan: 1901- 91,279; 1906 - 257,763; 1911 - 492,432 (Census of Canada, 1901, 1906 and 1911).
2. Ibid., Acres of field crops in production in Saskatchewan: 1900 - 655,537; 1911 - 9,136,868.
3. Evelyn Eager, *Saskatchewan Government: Politics and Pragmatism* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), 47.
4. David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905- 1971* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 55.
5. W.L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 35.
6. D.S. Spafford, "The Elevator Issue, the Organized Farmers And the Government, 1908-11," *Saskatchewan History* 15, no. 3 (1962): 84.
7. Harold S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Cooperation in Western Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), 98.
8. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 56.
9. W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 324.
10. Saskatchewan, *Report of the Agricultural Credit Commission* (Regina: Government Printer, 1913), 2.

Chapter Seven: Impending Calamity

1. Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 138.
2. Ibid., 4-5. For a discussion of the "vitalist" theory or the view that women had a limited amount of energy in comparison to men see: Wendy Mitchinson, *The Nature of Their Bodies: Women and Their Doctors in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 29 and Helen Lenskyj, *Out of Bounds: Women, Sport, and Sexuality* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 39.
3. Janet Oppenheim, *"Shattered Nerves": Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 15.
4. Ibid., 110.
5. S. Weir Mitchell, *Fat and Blood: An Essay on the Treatment of Certain Forms of Neurasthenia and Hysteria* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1885).
6. Oppenheim, *"Shattered Nerves,"* 122.

7. For a full description of Scott's absences, see page 123-24.
8. Lucille Iremonger, *The Fiery Chariot: A Study of British Prime Ministers and the Search for Love* (London: Seecher and Warburg, 1970), 33.
9. Ibid., 326.

Chapter Eight: "The Old Order Changeth"

1. E.H. Oliver, *The Social Achievements of the Christian Church* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1930), 4.
2. John Herd Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1978), 49, 60.
3. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1985), 137.
4. Thompson, *The Harvests of War*, 65.
5. Ibid., 97. See also: Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Ever a Crusader': Nellie McClung, First-Wave Feminism," in Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman (eds.), *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Limited, 1986).
6. James Gray, *Booze: The Impact of Whiskey on the Prairie West* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972), 81.
7. June Menzies, "Votes for Saskatchewan's Women," in Norman Ward and Duff Spafford (eds.), *Politics in Saskatchewan* (Don Mills, ON: Longmans Canada Limited, 1968), 80-81. A resolution, also called a motion, may be moved by any member of the Legislative Assembly in order to create debate and to measure the mood of the House. Even though resolutions are not binding on the government, they can apply pressure on Cabinet to change its policies.
8. Christine MacDonald, "How Saskatchewan Women Got the Vote," *Saskatchewan History* 1, no. 3 (1948): 7.
9. Catherine L. Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 46.
10. Menzies, "Votes for Saskatchewan's Women," 90.
11. Elizabeth Kalmakoff, "Naturally Divided: Women in Saskatchewan Politics, 1916-1919," *Saskatchewan History* 46, no. 2 (1994): 3. See also Elizabeth Kalmakoff, "Woman Suffrage in Saskatchewan" (Master's thesis, University of Regina, 1993).
12. If a government decides to publicly investigate allegations of wrongdoing, it has at least two options. It can either refer the matter to an existing or newly created legislative committee, or establish a Royal Commission. A legislative committee can be established merely by a motion in the Assembly which would name the members and outline the committee's powers. The Legislature can refer a matter to a "Standing Committee," such as the Public Accounts Committee, which has its membership and powers already established. For both committees, during Scott's time, the Chair was a government member of the committee.

    A Royal Commission is established by an order of the Lieutenant Governor, by practice on recommendation of the premier. In the order, the terms of reference or the scope of the study are stated, as well as the membership of the commission. It is usual to have commissions with one or more persons (often judges) chosen for their expertise in the area of study. Essentially the government selects the commissioners and the terms of reference, but once the commission has commenced its study, it conducts its proceedings in an independent manner.

    A government may choose to send a controversial issue to a committee in the belief that it will have more control over the depth and direction of the inquiry than with a Royal Commission. Opposition parties prefer Royal Commissions as a way of avoiding much of the government control. For both commissions and committees, the power is usually given to call witnesses and to examine them under oath. Reports, in both cases, are presented to the Legislature.

Governments have the option of taking a defensive stance by refusing to initiate an inquiry either in a commission or committee, but in so doing would leave the impression that it has something to hide. If a government wants a more limited or controlled review, it usually chooses the committee approach. The depth of the review and the control over the proceedings are the two chief differences between commissions and committees.

For the Bradshaw charges, the government agreed to send the matter to legislative committees for investigation. The Conservatives refused to participate in these committees and gave no further details until there were assurances that there would be an independent inquiry. The Opposition feared that the legislative committees, with a government majority, would fail to seek out all of the facts in the cases raised by Bradshaw.

13. Another example of this behaviour is shown on pages 139-42, during the Murdock MacKinnon affair.

14. Of the twenty-seven accusations raised by Bradshaw, two were dropped by counsel, fifteen were dismissed by the Commissions. Of the remaining ten, four private members were charged in a court of law. E.H. Devline, MLA Kinistino and H.C. Pierce plead guilty to charges of issuing forged documents and were sentenced to three years each in jail. C.H. Cawthorpe, MLA was released due to a hung jury and Gerhard Ens, MLA was cleared of the charges. J.P Brown, Chief Clerk of the Board of Highway Commissioners was found guilty of issuing forged documents and sentenced to seven years in the Prince Albert penitentiary. See J. William Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan, 1905-1929" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1976), 327.

15. Raymond Huel, "Pastor vs. Politician: The Reverend Murdock MacKinnon and Premier Walter Scott's Amendment to the School Act," *Saskatchewan History* 32, no. 2 (1979): 62.

16. Ibid., 62.

17. Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," 329.

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1. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, *Moments of Unreason: The Practice of Canadian Psychiatry and the Homewood Retreat, 1883-1923* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill- Queen's University Press, 1989), 43-44.

2. Ibid., 45.

3. Warsh, *Moments of Unreason*, 63-64.

4. Angus McIntosh, a Montreal businessman, who had experienced some unhappy financial losses through his business. He decided he would voluntarily check himself into Homewood for a week or two of rest. He did not feel "mentally ill" but only in need of some peaceful rest as promised by Homewood's advertisements. Once he was in Homewood, McIntosh's wife met with two physicians and a magistrate and had him committed, even though he apparently showed no signs of mental illnesses. As he was soon to find out, there was no way for him to fight this order, nor could he communicate with the "outside" world. After more than two years, McIntosh was finally able to get word of his false committal to some influential friends on the "outside," including Premier Mitchell Hepburn. McIntosh demanded a second opinion on the state of his mental health. The province retained two physicians to examine McIntosh and found that he was sane and able to leave Homewood, but McIntosh was not prepared to let the matter rest there. He demanded an examination of the commitment procedures of Homewood, charging that the psychiatrists were admitting people unnecessarily and keeping patients longer than necessary in order to bolster the financial bottom line of Homewood. The Barlow Commission was the result.

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Abbreviations

AO	Archives of Ontario
SAB	Saskatchewan Archives Board
SHS	Saskatchewan Historical Society
SLAO	Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly Office
USA	University of Saskatchewan Archives

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Walter Scott was a populist with a vision for the new province. A newspaperman, entrepreneur, and land speculator before being elected to the House of Commons in 1900, by 1905, Scott had become leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal party and premier of the new province. After the 1905 election, Scott embarked on a program to build the province's infrastructure, including the Legislative Building and the University of Saskatchewan. He believed that agriculture was a vital component in the fabric of Saskatchewan life, and by including farm leadership in cabinet, he created a political climate founded on agriculture. Scott's government was also instrumental in enacting prohibition and establishing female suffrage. The fruits of Walter Scott's labours in education, agriculture and public policy continue to be harvested in Saskatchewan today, but few remember who planted the original seeds.

In his day, Scott was respected for his leadership in the growth and development of Saskatchewan. With the publication of this landmark biography by Gordon L. Barnhart, Scott's pivotal role will be recognized anew by the generations who now live in the province he was instrumental in founding.

Gordon Barnhart is Associate Director, University of Saskatchewan International and Special Adviser to the President on Government Relations. He has served as Clerk of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly and the Senate of Canada.

ISBN 0-88977-142-1

9 780889 771420

CPS 40/$24.95/2000/ISBN 0-88977-142-1